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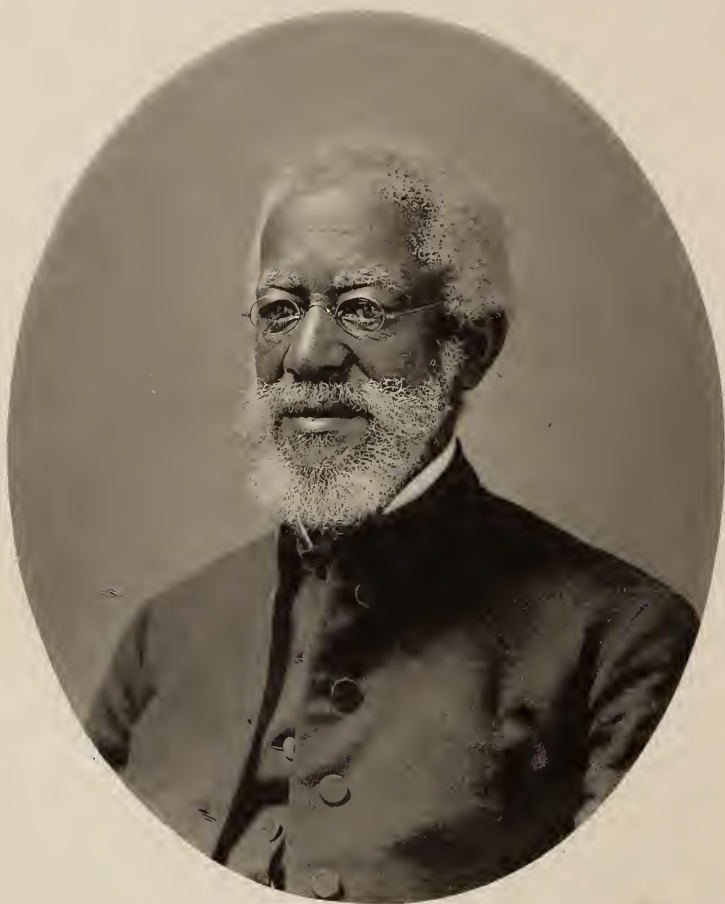
Wilmington Del May 9 1883

To ^{the} Bishop Edward Williams
from his daughter
Susan H G Jones





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Alex Lummell

THE
GREATNESS OF CHRIST

And Other Sermons

BY

ALEX. CRUMMELL

RECTOR OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Author of the "Future of Africa"



NEW YORK
THOMAS WHITTAKER

2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE

1882

Copyright, 1882,

BY ALEXANDER CRUMMELL.

To the

HONOURABLE JOHN JAY,

MY FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR;

THE LIFE-LONG FRIEND AND ADVOCATE OF MY RACE,

IN CHURCH AND IN STATE,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

WITH THE LASTING GRATITUDE, THE SINCERE ADMIRATION

AND THE DEEPEST RESPECT OF

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION

BY

THE RIGHT REV. THOMAS M. CLARK, D.D., LL.D.,

BISHOP OF RHODE ISLAND.

It is a rare thing, amid the multitude of sermons with which the world is flooded, to have a volume offered to us by a Clergyman of African descent. So far as I am informed, the only man of that race who has preceded Dr. Crummell in this work is the Rev. William Douglass, formerly Rector of St. Thomas's church in the city of Philadelphia; a most worthy and exemplary pastor, but who never enjoyed the literary advantages with which the writer of the present collection of sermons has been favored.

About forty years ago, I was appointed with the late Rev. Dr. William Croswell, by Bishop Griswold, to examine young Crummell, when he applied for Deacon's Orders in the Diocese of Massachusetts; and I remember that Dr. Croswell afterward remarked to me, that no candidate for the ministry had ever passed through his hands who had given him more entire satisfaction. Alexander Crummell was born in the city of New York, his mother and her ancestors for several generations never having been subjected to servitude, while his father early in life, although he came of a royal family, was made a slave. He was a native of Timanee, West Africa, a country adjoining Sierra Leone, and here he lived until he

was thirteen years of age. Dr. Crummell's grandfather was king of Timanee, and the incidents of his early life appear to have impressed themselves very strongly upon his son's memory. He was fond of describing the travels that he took with his father's caravans in the interior of Africa, and of the royal receptions given to them by the various kings, and appears to have made himself familiar with many of the geographical facts which have been brought to light by more recent explorers. How it happened that he was reduced to slavery, and found his way to this country, I am not informed.

At an early age, the author of these sermons was taught reading and writing, and was sent to the Mulberry street school, provided by the Quakers; afterwards, in common with his brothers and sisters, receiving further and better instruction from white tutors, employed by his father. In those days the advantages of colored children were very scanty, and such a provision as this for their benefit must have been a novelty.

In 1831 a high school was established by the Rev. Peter Williams, Mr. Crummell's pastor, aided by his father, Thomas Downing, and other leading colored men, who employed a white teacher to give instruction in Greek and Latin.

In 1835, for the first time in the history of the country, an Academy for the education of youth, irrespective of sex or color, was opened at Canaan, New Hampshire. With his friend Dr. Highland Garnet, the late Minister to Liberia, and others, Crummell became connected with this institution. The black youth had not been there over three months, when the farmers of the neighborhood assembled together and declared that the school must be broken up. Shortly afterward they brought some ninety yoke of oxen, carrying the academy building off and depositing it in a swamp; and then forced the scholars, on a given day, to quit the town. As the boys drove away, they received a parting salute from a field-piece, which the free-born citizens of the region fired at them.

The next year, 1836, Oneida Institute was opened to colored youth, and the young exiles from Canaan took up their abode there, where they studied for three years, working at farming, in order to pay their way.

In 1839, Crummell became a candidate for Holy Orders, under the direction of the Rev. Peter Williams, Rector of St. Philips Church, with which Mr. Crummell was connected. At the same time he applied for admission as a student in the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, and was refused; not because of any defect in his moral or intellectual qualifications, but solely on account of the extraordinary prejudice which prevailed against the race to which he belonged. He was then received as a candidate in the Diocese of Massachusetts, and in due time was ordained to the Diaconate by Bishop Griswold. After prosecuting his theological studies with the Rev. Dr. A. H. Vinton in Providence, R. I., he was admitted to Priest's Orders, in Philadelphia, by Bishop Lee of Delaware. The opportunity was now offered for him to avail himself of the great advantage of still further pursuing his studies in the University of Cambridge, in England, where he was kindly received, and enabled to fit himself more thoroughly for the important work which afterwards devolved upon him; when he determined to cast in his lot with his brethren, who had sought a home and a country in Liberia, where he remained for many years, taking the double duty of the Rectorship of a parish, and a Professorship in the College.

While a citizen of this new Republic, he was frequently called upon, on great public occasions, to officiate as orator of the day; and the addresses which he delivered were marked by great breadth of vision and foresight, a clear comprehension of the duties and dangers of the new nation, and profound historical research, as well as decided rhetorical power. The communications which from time to time have appeared

from his pen in the columns of "The African Repository" are distinguished by the same characteristics, and are among the most valuable papers which have appeared in that periodical. If Dr. Crummell had not been called to the work of the Christian Ministry, he might have become eminent as a statesman.

After passing the bloom of his days in Liberia, our friend returned to the United States, and has since been employed at the Capitol of the nation, in labors among his own countrymen; and now, in his more advanced years, he has ventured to give to the general public this volume of sermons, hoping that he may thus reach a larger congregation than could be gathered within sound of his living voice, and also add something to his not over-generous income. I think that I may assure the reader that he will find something in these Discourses that is fresh and original. The topics considered are varied and interesting, the counsel which the preacher gives to his people is sound and practical, and the sermons are pervaded by the life and light and unction of the Gospel. I hope that they will meet with a cordial reception from the public, and that their extensive sale may bring comfort and relief to our good brother, who has been called to suffer many things in the course of his earthly pilgrimage.

PREFATORY NOTE.

These sermons are published at the request of many parishioners and other friends, made from time to time, during many years and in divers quarters, both at home and abroad; and, likewise, in fulfilment of repeated promises to comply with those requests.

They are now given to the public, after well nigh forty years service in the ministry, as a memorial of a pastorate to several congregations, both in Africa and the United States; and with the hope that they may add somewhat to the Glory of Christ.

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SERMON I.

(Christmas.)

THE GREATNESS OF CHRIST.

ST. MATTHEW II, II.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him : and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts ; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

It was a little child, nay, a feeble, helpless infant, to Whom all this reverence and devotion were given. And it is, by imagination, the same little babe that all Christendom to-day turns back to and approaches with joy, and salutations, and profoundest worship. The point of interest in this little child is not simply that its body was small and weak, but that His person, diminutive as it was, was the germ of wondrous power, was the fountain-head of a world-wide ocean, was the root of prodigious reality which reaches from time over into deepest eternity.

It is one of the wide, general facts of nature, that the things of magnitude throughout the universe spring from small and minute causes. It is so with plants, and trees, and forests : tiny seeds are the parents of vast and formidable wildernesses ; so with beasts, and birds, and fishes ; so with the stars of heaven, whose brilliant

bodies derive from the impalpable *nebulæ* of the spheres ; so with the nations of the earth, with families and individuals. All the great things, all the great men we see, hear, or read of, passed from littleness up to magnitude and importance. It is, then, strictly in accordance with the analogy of all the things of God, that He, whose Advent we celebrate to-day, began His wondrous life in the feebleness of infancy. But our joy springs from the miracle of His life, which was divine, and the majesty of His mission, which was princely, beneficent, and godlike in all the minutiae of His work.

Nothing but this greatness of Christ could cause, from year to year, from century to century, this world-wide anniversary. Nothing but majesty, most august and profound, repressing the pride of reason and its sceptic doubts, could thus kindle the imaginations of men, start their united affections, and, on one day in the year, sinking their separate nationalities into oblivion, join their common sentiment into united adoration before the manger of Bethlehem !

I wish to speak to-day of the greatness of Christ. It is a greatness which has constantly manifested itself through the ages by a gracious but irresistible revolution, which has never, at any time, known a moment of cessation. We talk of the influence of Christianity ; and men oftentimes seem happy when they can thus drop

or deny a personality and make a catch-word of a system. But it is best, at all times, to speak the real facts of a case. No system, of itself, produces results. It is, in its results, the work of either devils, or of angels, or of men, or of God. There is a personality behind every organized institution, behind every bank, behind every insurance company, every mercantile house, every manufactory. So, too, of Christianity. It does not work itself. It is not the work of men and ministers. It is a result, in all nations, societies, families, and persons,—a result that is produced by Jesus Christ, present in this world by the power and energy of the Holy Ghost.

Let me point out a few things which the Lord Jesus has done, and which never would have been done if He had not come into this world, and which He alone, of all the intelligences, had the power to do.

First, see the great change our blessed Lord has made in the domain of thought. I refer to this special point at the first, not because I would exaggerate the intellect, as superior to the moral nature; for I do not. I speak first of our Lord's work in the realm of thought because the life of man and the life of society is determined chiefly by the convictions which are reached by the intellect. As a man "thinketh in his heart, so he is." According to the ruling ideas of an age or a nation, so is it.

Now the power of every being, in the sphere of mind,

may be seen in three special respects, viz. : (1) In the ability to stimulate thought ; (2) in the specific weight or quality of the thought expressed ; (3) in the practical or active nature of the thought put into human souls. In these several respects, you can see how unique, and how exalted, has been the force of the Lord Jesus, in all human history.

You will remember that always and everywhere the mind of man has been active ; for activity is a native quality of mind. It was active at the period of our Lord's Nativity ; active in its show of greed ; active in philosophy ; active in war and conquest ; active in the ambitions and dominancy of great men and great nations. It was an era of great luxury ; it was an age of prying and abstruse philosophies ; it was a period of subjugation of provinces and empires. The mind of men, at the time of the Saviour's birth, was seething, burning, with large and important problems and gigantic undertakings.

But previous to the time of Christ, notwithstanding all the activity of the human mind, there was a whole class of subjects, subjects of vast importance to the human soul, from which the mind of man was universally divorced. Religion was the possession and the practice of all peoples. But those noble features of religion which flow in lofty truths and sacred precepts from the lips of Jesus had never before circled the

brains, nor agitated the hearts, nor stimulated the sensibilities. I read the histories of men, pick out the annals of the noblest Pagan nations, select the writings of the most elevated of their sages, but search in vain, in the most abstruse and most elaborate of their treatises, for the grand divine conceptions which Jesus of Nazareth has put into the minds of men and of nations, and which have awakened them to life and energy.

I turn to the Scriptures, and find there the grandest ideas and principles which ever entered the mind of man; which did not come from the human mind, and which could only be of divine origin. The grand thought of Christ may be analyzed and presented somewhat under these three aspects: (a) That of His sovereignty and rule. He tells us of a divine and eternal government set up in this world, founded upon righteousness, sustained by heavenly affections, generated in our sinful nature by divine influences. "I establish a kingdom," says our Lord; and the Church, "the Kingdom of Heaven" on earth, the "Body of Christ," springs into existence; higher in authority than all the kingdoms of this world, mastering governments and dominions; and never has it failed; "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (b) Another phase of this truth of Christ is that of a reconstructed and spiritualized humanity, produced by the operations of the Holy Ghost in the kingdom of Christ. Our Lord promises

a righteousness put into our being, of which man had never before conceived. He guarantees us the reality of a regenerated humanity. He shows us, in His own life and excellence, the possibility of disinterested virtue as the possession of exalted men here on earth. He encourages us with the idea of a benignity and brotherhood among men, which shall destroy everywhere the spirit of revenge, national enmity, and fiery war, and usher in the reign of universal peace. And (c) He crowns these teachings and instructions with a phase of His truth which is at once celestial and transporting. He holds up to view a future state, where the everlasting craving of the soul shall be for the treasures which are incorruptible, and the riches which are eternal. That state is a state of eternal well-being in another sphere, in which men shall company forever with angels and archangels, and eternally enjoy the presence and glory of God!

These are the grand thoughts, yet only partially presented, which Christ has put into the minds of men: earthly in one aspect, working out philanthropies and enterprise in human society; heavenly in another and higher view, because reaching onward to eternal issues. See the wonderful revolutions they have produced among men! See the grand impulses they have started in all the lines of human action! See the great mastery they have given to select peoples, whom they have

elevated and invigorated! Note, above all, how, that, having once entered the soul of man, they have taken to themselves the law of heredity, and come down not only in the polity, in the governments, in the liberties, in the letters and literature, and in the laws, but actually in the blood of mighty nations, from age to age! Generations come and go, but these great thoughts of our Lord abide and reproduce themselves. Aye, and they are destined to stay here till the crack of doom! Persecutions like those of the Cæsars could not destroy them! Revolutions like that of France in 1792 could not crush them out! These thoughts are thoroughly vitalized with the life of God Himself. They are the thoughts of eternity, and have become so incorporated with our humanity in its very best conditions that they will work, quicken, and animate the masses of men, until, by and by, they get the ascendancy over all the thought, reasoning, and reflection of mankind.

Brethren, Jesus Christ is the most powerful thought, this day, in the intellect of man. The person, the claims, the idea of Jesus Christ, are producing more thinking, more philosophizing, as well in the infidel and pagan as in the Christian world, than all the science and politics of the nations. More thought, more speech, more works and treatises are inspired by the one single name of Christ, than by all the statesmen and kings of the entire world. One great personality has entered

this earth and thoroughly mastered its intellect, and thrown utterly into the shade all its other thought, reasoning, and speculation, in all the ages.

Second, I turn to another evidence of the greatness of Christ. I refer to that broad transformation of man's civilization which He has wrought. We have only to go back into the past histories of nations, and we shall see the nature of this achievement.

We all know somewhat the cultivation of Egypt, Babylonia, Phœnicia, Greece, and Rome. We know how various were the forms of this cultivation in these several peoples; but we find one broad generalization that may be made of them all, that is, that they were saturated with the spirit of brutality, lust, and murder. When one goes into the museums of Paris or London, and looks at the monuments of ancient art, dug up after centuries of dark repose from the ruins and debris of Nineveh, or Cyprus, or Greece, or Rome, it is difficult to say which form of astonishment is the greater, the astonishment at the exquisite perfection of the art, or the astonishment at the moral debasement they discover. The same contrast and disparity constantly come to mind, in reading the poetry and the histories of pagan writers. The paintings and the sculpture are too often vile and infamous. The condition of woman among them was degrading. Their family-life was barbarous, and not seldom shameless. Their social state presented

the varied aspect of great luxury, dazzling splendor, allied to gross license and unrestrained indulgence.

While it is difficult to define with exactness the term Civilization, the several items thus referred to may be taken as representing its prominent elements; and it is evident that the civilization of man, at the time of Christ's Advent and previous thereto, was not a power for good and elevation in the world.

See now the great work which has been done by our Lord in changing the moral complexion of human civilization. This revolution began in the family. It destroyed, first of all, the pagan status of womanly life. The Gospel law was a proclamation of equality to woman. In the Church of God she found at once, and for the first time, her place as man's equal and his companion. The elevation of woman in the Church was, at the same time, the reconstruction of the family. The household, thus sanctified and elevated, was a "Church in the House"; and it became an organic unit for wider, nobler uses beyond itself. As Christian households increased, the whole structure of social and domestic life became changed and purified. The saints, in heathen communities, carried the divine principle into their traffic, business, trades, professions, civil relations, and service; and so, gradually, the old, impure, pagan elements of society were everywhere antagonized by the Cross, and beaten down from supremacy. The

leaven of Christianity spread into every section of society; it seized upon every occupation; it entered every relation of life; it penetrated the army, the civil courts, the senate; and at last it reached the seat of Imperial Cæsar. "We are a people of yesterday," says Tertulian in his Apology; "and yet we have filled every place belonging to you,—cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camp, your tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum! We leave you your temples only. We can count your armies; our numbers in a single province will be greater." And about the middle of the second century, says Justin Martyr: "There is no people, Greek or barbarian, or of any other race, by whatsoever appellation or manners they may be distinguished, however ignorant of arts or agriculture, whether they dwell in tents or wander about in covered wagons, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered in the name of the crucified Jesus to the Father and creator of all things."

When the Gospel had done its work in the Roman Empire, it stretched out for new conquests in the other states of Europe. Nay, the Roman Empire was God's instrument and agency for the spread of this newly-created Christian civilization. The empire conquered tribe after tribe, province after province, one barbarous nation after another, and subjected them to Roman law and authority. And then the Church seized, in Christ's

Name, upon the Empire, and made it her agent, whereby a chastened Christian civilization was spread throughout Europe. And this day every one sees the grand outcome of the whole process. Christianity, at this moment, is the masterful power in every European state, and through their laws, colonies, and commerce, wields the sceptre of the globe.

Let us pause, just here, for a moment, and make a reckoning of our Master's great work this nineteen hundred years, in the renovation of the world's civilization. You will recall what I suggested as the elements of civilization—the family, the status of woman, dress, culture, manners, social life, art. Art, however, may be taken as the crowning point, the criterion of civilization. See, then, herein, the wonderful change Christ has made in this regard. I will speak of but two or three of the chief of the arts,—painting, sculpture, and music.

In 1851, in the first world's "Great Exhibition," I stood up in the Crystal Palace in London, amid groups of statuary. I walked through long avenues of painting gathered from all the great galleries of Europe; and there was not a picture, not a statue there, which the most innocent maiden might not look at, with as much peace and purity as she would at the midday skies. At the Advent of Christ, if such an exhibition had been held, almost everything would have been smirched! If you go this day to Pompeii, and ask for the gallery which

contains the pictures recovered from the lava of Vesuvius, no decent man, I am told, would dare to ask his wife or sister to gaze upon those pictures! To this may be added the other telling fact, namely, that no woman is permitted to see the art treasures of antiquity, in the Vatican, at Rome!

See now the change. The Lord Jesus Christ has been laying His Cross upon art, as well as upon law, the family, and social life; and wondrous transformations have taken place in all the elements of the world's civilization. Nothing has escaped the influence of our divine Lord, nothing evaded His miraculous touch. Invisible, indeed, to sight, He has been passing through the centuries amid the choicest, most delicate craft wrought out by human genius, and touched them, and by this touch driven out the vile possession of paganism, and put into them the life and beauty of heaven; and so all art has been more and more sanctified to most sacred purposes. The churches and cathedrals of the world, are grander in their structure and their style, than the palaces of kings and emperors; and they are erected for the glory of Christ. The very finest paintings in the royal galleries of kingdoms tell, in magnificent colorings, the story of Bethlehem; the temple scene among the Doctors; the agony in the Garden; Christ, as Da Vinci represents Him, at the Holy Table; the Cross of Calvary; and Christ amid the clouds of glory ascending

into heaven. The pencil of the artist has no such touches, his brush no such hues as those lavished upon the Crucified! So, too, that other art, which through the ear stirs the soul with deepest sensibilities,—that, also, has been chastened and sanctified by the touch of the Cross! The highest, noblest, holiest raptures of the harp, the organ, and the human voice, have been evoked by the life, the sufferings, and the glories of Christ! All along this Christian era the saints of God have been pouring forth their praises in the loftiest strains, and the tenderest love to the Lamb, in “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,” “singing and making melody in their hearts,” out-rivalling therein the grandest secularities of human song. Yes, music rolls forth its deepest tones, sends out its sweetest melodies in the grand *Te Deum*, the plaintive *Miserere*, and the majestic *Magnificat*. Everything beautiful in earth has been more beautified by the Cross. For, as Keble sings:

The base earth, since Christ has died,
Ennobled is and sanctified.

Third, your notice is called to one other striking evidence of the greatness of Christ,—the humanizing influence He has put into, and diffused throughout the world.

We mourn, day by day, at the brutal acts which are chronicled in our newspapers. We are horror-struck at the fearful murders which are constantly committed.

Our souls sink when we read or think of the ravages and slaughter of the battlefield, which still disgrace this Christian era.

Bad as all this is, contrast it with the state of the world before and at the coming of Christ, when war was the trade of nations; when nothing but extermination was the end and issue of their fierce and interminable conflicts; when one nation would lift up with hoarse, univocal, brutal tones against another, "Carthago delenda est"; when such a thing as arbitration was never known nor even thought of by the noblest pagan thinkers; when the Temple of Mars at Rome was kept almost perpetually open; when "fire, famine, and the sword" devastated vast empires and swept colossal nationalities so completely out of existence, that even their foundations are now undiscoverable!

My contention, be it noticed, is not that Christianity has abolished war. Christianity, in its best results, is not an extemporaneous affair. God, in His providence, moves with majesty, and not in a flash. To use the words of Guizot, "He hurries not himself to display to-day the consequences of the principle that He yesterday laid down; He will draw it out in the lapse of ages, when the hour is come." Christianity has not yet entirely abolished war. But the greatness of Christ is seen in the fact that He *has been abolishing war* all the centuries through, by the humanization which He has

introduced into the policy of nations. All along the Christian era His faith has been lessening the frequency of wars ; diminishing the cruel, pagan slaughter of war ; extinguishing the brutish, heathen love of war ; and, above all, counteracting and extirpating the *idea* of war as a motive of national and personal action. So that now, in the nineteenth century, we have reached this state of the case, namely : that nations are hesitant about entering upon war ; *when* war does take place, it is under the most urgent, absolute necessity ; *while* it is carrying on, everything possible is done to alleviate its horrors ; and especially that, when a Minister of State, in any land, proclaims in any way to the world that the trade of war is a prime policy of his country, the Christian world rises up in indignation, and by the voice of a Burke, or a Channing, or a Gladstone, blasts that statesman to utter ruin, and drives him to disgrace and confusion. Added to all this is the notable fact that, in our own day the principle of arbitration has become a part of international law, as a preventive of the slaughter of men, and for the promotion of national peace, equity, and justice !

See, too, the humanizing influence of Christianity in the suppression of the slave trade, in the destruction of piracy, in the abolition of slavery, in the reformation of prisons, in the progress of the temperance cause, in the improvement of tenement houses, in the increase of

hospitals and infirmaries; in the care of the blind, the deaf, and the dumb; in the godly efforts to prevent the ravages of licentiousness; and in the merciful endeavours to save the victims of prostitution! In all these generous, gracious ventures which one sees throughout all Christendom, we recognize the working of that quality of mercy, the special attribute of Christ,

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath:

This spirit has been working its way nigh two thousand years, against the deep depravity of mankind; but only in this age has it succeeded, to any large degree, in the exercise of its fullest power. We have now, at last, reached the age of missions and noblest charities. In these times we are permitted to see, not only in Christian lands, but in the pagan quarters of the globe, whither the Church of God is speeding, all the fair humanities, the large philanthropies, the saving appliances which are fitted to restore, uplift, and regenerate the most degraded of the human species. Never before in the history of man has the thoughtful mind been so alert and active as now, in ingenious effort for human good. The beneficence of man is instinct with curiosity. The spirit of benevolence, and even of evangelization, is no longer confined to the Church of God. It is the spirit of the age. Our Lord Christ has put this spirit into insurance companies, and mercantile

ventures. It stimulates adventure. It prompts geographical research. It vitalizes science. It gives coloring and tone to literature. Just take this single, simple fact, and ponder on it. The poetry of the ancients has come down to our day with a finish and a glow, which holds for centuries, the admiration of the schools, and which has given them the title of "classic." And yet you may sweep the entire field of Grecian and Roman poetry in vain, to find a poem of such genial human sentiment, of such real hope and brotherly aspiration for man, as the simple song,

There's a gude time coming,

or the fine stanzas of Burns which give us the noble refrain,—

A man's a man for a' that.

I have thus given you a few tokens of the greatness of Christ, in words that may seem somewhat as though a man should take a single ray from the burning lustre of the midday sky, and hold it up as a specimen of sunlight. The evidences of our Lord's greatness and majesty crowd the eye, and overcome both mind and memory. It seems impossible but that they should impress us all with the deepest sensibility and the greatest reverence. Here is a Being who comes into the world in precisely the same manner as every one of us has entered it. He was born of woman. His infancy was helpless and feeble. But all His after-life was unique,

separate in its influence and power, from every other being that ever lived on earth. He lived some thirty-three years, a life of blessedness, labor, suffering, and insult, and at last died an ignominious death! And yet His divine face, the odor of His sanctity, the glories of His nature, and the mystical power of His resurrection come streaming down the centuries, neutralizing the might, majesty, and splendor of kings, statesmen, and warriors, and, casting them all in the shade, attracting to Himself the homage of the centuries! Mine is not the task to-day to produce evidences of the truth of Christianity. It is no purpose of mine to vindicate the Deity of my Master; but I submit, that this singular fact in human history, the greatness of Christ, is unaccountable, if it be not divine! There is no room in the mind of any devout believer for misgivings. All will admit that the instinct which looks to Christ as a Saviour, as the world's regenerator, must be an universal one. We go to Bethlehem to-day; we approach Him with the reverent homage of the Magi, as the fountal source of all this majestic power of the Christian era, to see God manifest in the flesh, to see the first manifestation of that interference which God graciously effected for our rescue and deliverance. We have no gold, frankincense, and myrrh to offer the infant Jesus; but we would fain present Him that which is far more acceptable, the best devotions of the heart, the lavish outpour-

ing of the affections. We go to Bethlehem, and remembering all the wonderful works of Jesus, by apostles and martyrs, by holy men and women, by missionaries and evangelists, by philanthropists and churches, by gifts, and charities, and offerings ; we acknowledge Him as the originator of all the blessedness of the Christian faith, and hail Him “Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace!”

SERMON II.

THE FAMILY.

(*The First Sunday after the Epiphany.*)

ST. LUKE II, 46-52.

And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And when they saw Him they were amazed: and His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business? And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

The Gospel for this Sunday presents to our sight those three remarkable persons, Joseph, the Virgin Mary, and the child Jesus, whose names and history hold such distinguished position in the beginning of the Gospel of Christ. First of all, there stands in the background St. Joseph, the espoused husband of the blessed Virgin. Still more prominent to view appears the person of the holy mother, the ever blessed Virgin, that

Lily of Eden's fragrant shade,

the loftiest woman of the race of men. But the light of this holy circle is the divine person of the Holy Child Jesus standing in the center, illuminating, by His supernatural wisdom, the astonished minds of the doctors of the law. As we are privileged to regard these personages as individuals, especially the Holy Child, in His Epiphany in the temple, so, likewise, the Church presents them to our sight and contemplation as the Holy family of Nazareth. And the charm of this presentation has attracted the gaze of more than nineteen centuries and subdued the hearts of multitudes. Art, in its several departments, has lavished its choicest gifts upon this scene. Poetry has delighted to sing its beauty and its glory; sculpture has plied its most delicate and cunning touch to mould and fashion into exquisite and subduing figures the ideal forms of this Holy group; and painting has laid her brightest and sweetest colors upon the canvas to idealize the calm beauty of Mary Madonna, the retiring meekness of Joseph, and the celestial glory of the boy Christ.

I gladly seize upon this scene, to-day, to present to your consideration the topic, RELIGION IN THE FAMILY.

And, first of all, if I am asked the obligation of family religion, I base it upon the fact that the family is one of those organic relations, or institutions, which was established by the Almighty for His own use, honor, and glory. It is, observe, an *organic* body, not

an artificial state, such as a bank or an insurance company. These are artificial arrangements, which are not absolutely necessary to the existence of society. They may or may not exist; and either way society remains intact, and humanity makes progress. But the family is one of those structural bodies which are essential to the very being and continuance of the race. It is the very first organism ever created on earth. The family is the primal society of human beings, instituted in Paradise as the very base and foundation of all the other societies of men. It is evident, alike from nature and revelation, that the Almighty has created certain relations or unities which are designed to absorb the personal, and to mingle multitudinous units into general organic wholes. The most apparent of these are, the family, the Church, the state or nation. It was the remark "of a distinguished scholar," "that there are *five* essential and indissoluble corporations in human society: the Family, the State, the Church, the Guild (that is, every species of traffic, industry, etc.), and the School."

These corporations, or unities, are of Divine origin. They were established cotemporaneously with the creation of man. Hence they are not mere human expedients or adjustments, found necessary by man in the development of the race or the progress of society. They are natural subsistences, deeply bedded in man's original constitution, planted by the Maker in the frame-

work of our nature ; and without which we could not be.

The family, then, as an institution, belongs to God. It is His own possession. And as He made man, with the chief end of his existence the glory of God, so, likewise, it follows that the organism of the family, which is rooted in the prime elements of our humanity, exists primarily as a divine agency for the glory of God.

Here, then, is the basis of this obligation of religion in the family. The family is an instrument of the Almighty, organized for the specific end that it should show forth the honor and glory of the Maker.

Second, we turn now to the elements of family religion. What are these elements?

(a.) First of all, as one of the very first constituent principles of family religion, is *authority*. The family is a government. It is the rudimental government, out of which spring all the organizations of society, whether they be nations, or empires, or schools, or associations. All of them, traced back to their original source, find their root in that simple company, the family.

Of this government, the father and the mother are the joint heads, commissioned, both by nature and revelation, to exercise rule, authority, and guidance. But in this united authority, the man by the sanction of nature and revelation, by law and custom, by reason and instinct, has the precedence. Man, that is, the

male, there can be no doubt, is made, in all the organic relations of life, the head of this lower creation. He is placed, officially, in the position of largest responsibility and power. In the family the father is the head. The wife stands immediately at his side, *not* behind him, his co-mate, authorized to exercise rule and lordship in the little kingdom of the household.

What is the nature of this family-rule, that is, in its essence and highest quality? It is, without doubt, a divine and sacred rule. The head of the family stands in the place of God, and as representing to his household the divine Father. The family government is a divine government, just as much so, in its essential quality, as the Church is a divine government. Indeed, ALL legitimate government on earth is divine. It is God's government everywhere; and men are God's agents to carry it on. So in the family, the parents are the authorities of the Almighty, to impose divine laws, in their application to the bodies, minds, and spirits of the household, the children, which God has given them.

As thus characterized, the family is no place for mere will, or caprice, or selfish gratification. Parents have no right to govern their households in this manner. There is a higher law present in their circle. The primary reference, in the exercise of rule, is the will and law of God. Fatherhood, divine fatherhood, is the root principle of all family rule. And families, so far as rule

and governance are concerned, are to be a reflex of that high and august government which is carried on in the heavens. It is *God's*, not mere man's will, which is to permeate all its transactions, of which will the parents are the administrators.

Now if these principles with respect to family government are correct, you can easily see how large an element is religion in all true family government; for it places God *first* in all of its legitimate rule and authority. And you can see likewise, in the light of these principles, how vast must be the misgovernment in many families. For, alas, how numerous are the families which spring up, through marriage, where there is no God! How many the households where God's will is never referred to! How large the number of dwellings where there is no rule or government at all, but nothing but misrule and unrestrained license! Who of you here does not know of families where the parents are nothing but tyrants? Of other families where the parents are but as slaves, beneath the feet of shameless, selfish sons and daughters? Of homes where even little children rule with a rod of iron, and would fain lord it over masters and mistresses in the public schools?

I have the impression that there is no country in the world where there is so much loose family government as in America. The democratic sentiment has invaded our households. It has expelled, very largely, the divine

element from its inclosure. It would be ludicrous, if it were not so solemn a matter, to hear the constant talk in our day concerning the rights of children, in immediate connection with the most glaring misrule, childish license and violence, and utter family anarchy.

And these evils spring from this notable fact, that men too generally have lost sight of God as the great, grand factor in all household arrangements, in all family government. If you will not have God as governor, you cannot have the blessings of rule and order in your houses. This is the beginning of everything gracious and beneficent in your circles. If you do not begin *here*, with God, you have made no beginning! Hear what the Almighty said of Abraham: "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." How many of you who are parents command your children and households to walk in the ways of truth and righteousness? How many of you use and exercise your parental authority for the right and the godly in your houses? How many of you say to your children, "No, that shall not be done in my house, for it dishonors God"? How many of you catechise your children in the truths and principles of our holy religion, teaching them their duty to God and their neighbor? How many of you have the courage, to stand up for Christ,—godly women in the face of Christless men,

pious men in the face of indifferent and godless women? How many of you maintain holy worship in your households? "My house is a temple of God!" was the utterance of a clergyman to a worthless son; "and you shall not defile this house with your depravity." There was the setting forth of a true idea. God was ruler in that house. The father was only the steward, agent, instrument of God therein, for guidance and direction. The government of the house was to be a divine government; and he, its earthly head, stood there the sentinel, to guard and sustain the lawful authority of God in the family, which is His!

But I turn to another important element of family religion, and that is love. It is more important as a quality than is government; but its place is, nevertheless, secondary. The very first element in all society is order, or government. "Order is heaven's first law." The principle of government, as providing the ruling power and assigning the relative positions of subjects, has priority of observance; and then, authority secured, we have place for the free play of all the other sentiments which are necessary to the full realization of family life and religion. Love stands the highest of all these sentiments; for it is, first of all, a principal accessory to rule and authority; it is the parent of obedience; it is the basis of unity in the household. Alas, how often is this forgotten, even in so-called Christian house-

holds! Affection, without doubt, is often retained between husband and wife. It is manifested, too, by parents to beloved children. But the point is this, that this family-love is not chastened, deepened, and inflamed by the love of God. Natural love may and doubtless does frequently exist; but it is not vitalized, sanctified, and fed invisibly and constantly by the fires and the sacred breathings of God the Holy Ghost. Now it is because of the fact that natural powers and faculties are impaired by the Fall, that supernatural forces have been introduced into this wretched world. There is a lack of sufficiency in unassisted human nature for the right discharge of any of the duties of life. Sin has introduced an element of weakness and imbecility into every endowment of man. Our very best members are unhinged and disjointed by it. As a consequence, we need, in every province of our being, help, strength, sustenance. This is as true, in the domain of the affections and sympathies, as with regard to bodily power or intellectual acuteness. It is the lack of this supernatural element in the love of Christian families which is the cause of so many family failures. The link of affection which joins husband and wife in the marriage bond needs to be lifted up above mere instinct, elevated beyond mere human fondness and sensibility, and fastened on to the throne of God. And the affection which both craves the gift of children, and which rejoices in

the prattling of infancy, the buddings of youthful capacities, and the full blossomings of maidenhood and early manhood,—that affection, if ever matured into fullest ripeness, must needs be baptized with the spirit of God. Nothing can take the place of the love of God. Love is the fulfilling of the law. It is the grand element of completeness in all things. It is the one only quality which can give to things roundness, symmetry, wholeness. Do not be satisfied, therefore, in having this divine element only in the Church; make it the presiding influence in your families. Let the mutual love of husbands and wives rise up to spiritual solicitude for each other's souls and for their growth in grace; and then there will be no danger of youthful, unmarried love, dying out after the ties of marriage have been fastened. It is, indeed, only the sanctity of grace which will serve to preserve all the gallantry of youth to men for old age, and to retain in women the graceful charms and the tender assiduities of girlhood to their late decline.

And so likewise for children. They are sure to see, in every well-regulated family, prudence, forecast, economy, acquisitiveness, aspiration after refinement. But these are only worldly expedients. And if they see nothing but these, how can they escape the mastery of these mere earthly motives? How can they, when age comes upon them, help exclaiming, as the result of the bitter experiences you have given them, "Man is

of the earth, earthy." "Vanity of vanities," saith the preacher, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity." For if you rise in your families no higher than these temporal regards, wise and skilfull as you may be, the end can be none other than chaff and nothingness. No, your children need a supernatural element intermingled with all the duties, relations, and processes of family life. It is always the case, in all the relations of human life;—

He builds too low who builds below the skies.

If you would save your offspring from disaster here and ruin hereafter, you must both raise your family up to the skies, and strive, by the power of the Holy Ghost, to bring down the skies into your households. The only agency by which this can be done is the Cross. The motives and the stimulants which are divine come only from the love of Christ acting upon human breasts. Seek this power for your homes and households. It is capable of producing the loftiest transformations. The love of God, as the spring of family life and conduct, will give supernatural ideas and motives to your children's minds. It will make even authority fall into the background, to be swallowed up in the divine affections. It will raise your entire households above the gross and carnal. It will give unearthly light to your eyes, and keener blood in your veins for duty and godly service. "Not till we call down the spirit of God Himself," says Martineau, "can we find the consummate

fruit of love, and joy, and peace. There is an affection higher than we have named, a divine love directed first upon God Himself, and thence drawn into the likeness of His own love, and going forth upon other natures, in proportion to their worth and claims. This is the crowning and culminating term of all prior affections, presupposing them and lifting them up from clashing and unrest to harmony and peace."

Third, to secure this grand and gracious influence in your households, let me, in conclusion, press the obligation, as the third element of family religion,—the duty and privilege of worship. Every Christian man's body is a temple of the Holy Ghost. Every Christian man's *dwelling* is God's house; for, as he himself belongs to God, so, likewise, everything he possesses is God's property, for glory and honor. Even the heathen acknowledge this principle. The ancient Greeks and Romans dedicated a portion of their mansions to the service of their household gods. The simplest heathen in our own day associate invisible presences and supernatural powers with the simplest details of domestic life. Indeed, it is an instinct of humanity everywhere on earth to associate the religious sentiment with outward symbols, with locality, with designated spots and places, with consecrated sites, and with both humble and majestic buildings. The idea itself finds its clearest expression in the poet's utterance :

The groves were God's first temples,

says Bryant. Their o'erhanging arches gave the semblance, to both eye and imagination, of lofty cathedrals, for the service of the Maker; and in *them*, *not* on barren plains, men in crowds were wont to assemble, as though they were houses, for their rites and ceremonies. Then, as civilization advances, grand, lofty edifices were constructed for God's glory.

At the beginning of the Christian religion, the Christians were poor, and could not build churches. They were despised, and hence could not use the temples of their countrymen. The house became the place of assembly. When a family became disciples, that house became at once a consecrated building, for religious worship. And hence the frequent expression in Epistles, "the Church in the house." But, observe, it was everywhere assumed that the Christian man, by baptism, became a priest of God, and his house at once was consecrated into a temple. Consider here the two principles of priesthood. The first of these is *worship* as an obligation and a duty. In Scripture, the patriarchs, which means fathers, were both rulers and priests. A part of their authority was to secure the observance of religious rites, and to offer up sacrifices. Hence, among the Jews, and, indeed, in all nations, they were the unconsecrated persons, who presided at the tribal or national altars, and led in all the sacred observances of religion.

But *instruction* was another function of the priestly office. It is their duty to train the people, intrusted to their care, in all the dogmas and precepts, the principles and duties of their religion. More especially is this an obligation pertaining to the young. Childhood and youth are the special periods of receptivity, in all spiritual enlightenment, and in the inculcation of moral precepts. These, then, are the special functions of parents, as the priests in the household.

The busy, thoughtless, Christless world may live forgetful of this duty. Worldly, carnal-minded people may shut out God from all their mind, and close the door upon His entrance in their households; but you, who are Christian men and women, how can you deliberately thrust the Christ from the centre of your circles? And yet, alas, how numerous are the men and women who profess and call themselves Christians, where the voice of family worship is never heard? They have, perchance, religion in the heart, profess religion in the Church, but have no place for it in the family! I do not pause an instant to point out the incongruity of this state of things, nor its deviation from godly rectitude. But I beg and exhort you, my brethren, to undertake an immediate revolution of your family habits in this respect. First of all, set God before you and your households, as king and governor. Put Him in the *first* place, and make all other things secondary. Deter-

mine that God's honor and glory shall be the primary principle of your family life; and then, next, give expression to this purpose. Bring it out from the hidden, unseen recesses of mind and will, into living reality. Tell it out to every ear in your homes and houses, that Christ is king, and join with angels and archangels in setting forth His praise. Do not let the religion of your heart be a sequestered and a hidden thing, secluded from the sight, inaudible to the ears of men. Give *expression* to the sacred intents, the holy purposes of your hearts. Erect the family altar. Invoke the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit of Christ, as an abiding reality in your households. "Let your prayers be set forth as the incense, the lifting up of your hands as a sacrifice." Accustom the boys and girls, the maidens, the youth, and the prattling infants of your family, to lift up holy hands, asking daily the presence and the blessing of heaven, and sending up to the skies the accordant thanksgiving of joyful, grateful hearts.

I have called your attention, this morning, to the beautiful picture, in the Gospel for the day, of the most perfect and exalted family that ever breathed the common air, or walked beneath the skies. And with it I have joined a consideration of the duty of family religion. For this picture, which stands so brightly before us to-day, is no legend; it is no splendid fiction; it is no

picture of the imagination, drawn by some grand artist. It is solemn, solid, glorious fact. There has been *one* human, earthly family this side of Paradise, with all the mellowing hues of purity and simplicity, of excellence and holiness, of grace and sanctity. And the charm of this picture comes not from the outshining of genius, from the hoarded treasures of earthly wealth, from the pomp and pageantry of earthly pride and magnificence. No! the family of Nazareth was one of the humblest and most retiring. All the power and impress of this Gospel for the day, comes streaming down to us through all the centuries of the Christ, to this Church, this morning, from the simple power of serene, exalted, and divinest holiness. That holiness, my friends, that family holiness is your example. It is given in the Scriptures of God for your imitation. Do not interpose the cold misgiving that that family holiness is so remote, so far separated from us, that we can never reach it. Do not plead that these holy persons, in their sanctity were unearthly, in their goodness superhuman! Joseph and Mary were beings exactly after the fashion of our sinful nature. It was because Jesus was there that that was the holy family of Nazareth. And so Jesus will be really present with you, every one of you, to sanctify your families. He did sanctify the person of the Virgin in her conception, and so has sanctified all birth in the world. He has sanctified childhood, youth, manhood,

marriage, the family of Nazareth! And so, if you will only open your hearts and your doors, He will come into your every household, and sanctify your lying down and your rising up; sanctify your breaking bread and eating meats; sanctify your family altars and your domestic worship; sanctify your going out and your coming in; sanctify your sons and daughters; sanctify your business and your bartering,—yea, make you in very deed holy families, like that of Nazareth; sweet and beautiful in your lives, and in your deaths and immortality—undivided.

SERMON III.

(The Second Sunday after the Epiphany.)

MARRIAGE

ST. JOHN II, I.

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.

This passage is a portion of the Gospel for the day. It presents to us the fact, that our blessed Saviour gave His gracious presence at a marriage feast; and it affords the significant inference that, by His presence thereat, we may learn the sanctity of marriage itself. On this occasion, moreover, He performed the first of His marvelous and multitudinous miracles; which throws a halo of sanctity around this bright occurrence; thus illustrating the language of the English marriage service "that He adorned and beautified the marriage rite with His presence and first miracle which He wrought."

As I wish, this morning, to address you upon the ordinance of marriage, may I ask you to pause just here, for a moment, to consider the fact that marriage is one of the two original ordinances, which God established at the very foundation of human life and society, in the

Garden of Eden; and that, as an institution, it **is** co-equal with the human race; that its obligation was unfailingly maintained two thousand years and more before the Mosaic covenant, by patriarchal observance; that it received fresh and divine adornment, by solemn rites and ceremonies in the Jewish Ritual; that our Lord Jesus Christ renewed its sacred authority, and shed benignant lustre upon it, by both His presence and His miraculous power, at the marriage feast of Cana; that His Apostles, under the inspiration of His blessed Spirit, declare, that "marriage is honourable in all men and the bed undefiled;" and lastly, so sacred a union is it that Holy Scripture holds it up, as typical of the union between Christ and His Church, and as foreshadowing the "heavenly union between Christ and His redeemed, the marriage of the Lamb and His wife."

An institution which comes to us with such sanctions deserves most careful, not to say most solemn consideration; and while I ask your thoughtful attention this morning, I invoke the assistance and the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that I may speak with plainness and with honesty, upon a subject which touches so tenderly upon every thing in life, and whose influences are undying and eternal.

I. What is the root of this ordinance? My answer is—Love. There are two special factors in marriage, and love is the primal and most prominent. Marriage,

you will observe, is, in its fundamental aspect, the union of spirits and hearts. This is its prime factor. *This* wanting, the alliance is so far forth vitiated. It is not indeed annulled. We dare not say that this revokes the contract; but it is evident that *this* element lacking, the value of the ordinance is lessened, and its dignity obscured.

Love, then, is the basis, the vital element, in this most important transaction.

But love, be it remembered, is a spiritual principle, most distinct in its nature, and incapable of being interchanged for any kindred quality. If love be lacking, there is no other sentiment, in kind, which can take its place. In material matters you can substitute one thing for another. You may dispense with bricks, and supply their place by stone. You may exchange money for land. But love, as an element of the marriage contract, is a single, unique, fixed, and invariable quality, which allows, in no case, commutation. Love, then, is the essential, vitalizing sentiment of wedlock. Love is the very core and kernel of marriage. Such being the case, we see most clearly the baseness and degradation, when, instead of love, as the primary element, some other lower sentiment is introduced, and the alliance is based upon an inferior motive. Too often people marry for ease; for self-satisfaction; for mere worldly advantage; for luxury; for position; for power and for pelf.

Fathers and mothers have been known to barter their daughters for gold, for jewels, for lands and possessions. Parents not unfrequently interfere, and crush out genuine love; in order to secure for their children the temporary advantages of wealth. Both men and women deliberately, and with supremest caution, make a trade of marriage, and seek the companionships of life on the principle of gain. Nay, even young girls, at times, unhesitatingly avow the purpose to marry only where there is the certainty of money and property.

Now I beg to say that not greed, not houses, not money, not land, not ease and luxury, are the basis of matrimony; but love. The very first element in this grand matter is the affections. The putting this primary quality aside for any other, as a chief end or object, is one of the grossest things conceivable.

I am speaking, observe, of primary ends, the cardinal purposes of marriage. And these first secured always allow the consideration of secondary objects. And doubtless there is full propriety in thinking over and weighing well those other objects, if love be only placed first, in the category of matrimonial motives. *That* first maintained, it is perfectly proper to inquire into those other conditions. No man, no woman ought ever to enter into this state; no parents ought to give their consent to any alliance, without paying proper attention to the temporal accidents which pertain to matrimony.

Our existence in this world is full of temporal necessities. Sickness and casualties occur; care and burdens daily accumulate; hence, nothing can be more imprudent, than to enter the married state, without careful and prudent consideration of all the questions, which relate to the support of a family; the means of living, the prospect of getting on in life, the likelihood of at least comfort, and eventually the procuring a home. What I contend for is that these are not the first consideration. *That*, I insist upon it, is love. I maintain most decidedly that, far above house, and food, and clothes, and good living, the grand principle of marriage is the living affections. The primary factor in the marriage life is the union of hearts and spirits.

I cannot quit this part of my subject without calling your attention to the *nature* of this primary motive in marriage; and this I have declared to be love. But this word is not self-determined. Back of it lies the further question as to its meaning and significance. Now, when I speak of love, I mean, indeed, that deep and ardent affection, far above friendship, far more glowing than regard, which the one sex entertains for the other. But I mean nothing whimsical, flighty, and unreasonable; not a violent flame blazing up in the soul, fed only by passion, and uncontrolled by sense or reason. This is the mistake young people often make, and, in making, they do rude violence to the judgment,

and rush into irremediable ruin. Love, like our other passions, is placed under our control, and we are responsible for its exercise. The love I speak of, this morning, as the primal element of marriage, is that sentiment which subordinates itself to reason, judgment, and prudence; which subjects itself to advice; which runs parallel with parental regard and mature discretion.

Now, if these principles be correct, love as a sentiment, gives no justification for the several wrong things we often see in families, such as the wild rejection of parental advice, the setting aside common prudence with regard to temporal arrangements, mis-mating with diseased persons, and mis-alliances, thereby contracting social degradation. True love, I say, like our other affections, is under our control, and can never justify any such perverse, unreasonable, and lawless acts. I have thus set before you the primary and more prominent factor in marriage, which is love.

2. I turn now to a consideration of the secondary factor in this institution. This I would define in this manner, viz., that marriage is a union of persons. The former, that is, the prime factor, was the spiritual, viz., love. This collateral element is, by contrast, the carnal or material consideration. I say that, subordinate to the primal motive, marriage is, secondarily, a union of persons; and by this I mean that it is the joining together, in corporate union, of two living, corporal beings.

And this aids us in ascertaining the meaning of the words of Scripture: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." The spiritual factor, love, produces a unity of hearts and affections. This present aspect of the matter joins them into one flesh, and has relation to sex and the bodily and physical relations. So that the union of a man and a woman, in the holy estate of matrimony is, in a manner, a joining, equivalent to that of one member to another in the natural body. Hence, in a sense, a man in marrying adds to himself the physical powers and properties of the woman; and the woman, likewise, joins on to her body, the entire bodily members and functions of the man. The result of this junction of persons is a duality, entitled man and wife, which is, in effect, a new organism, which we call the family.

Out of this union of animate persons, distinct in sex, but one in substance, springs the special function of marriage; which is to produce children, and to perpetuate the human race. The Almighty laid upon them both, the man and the woman, this cardinal injunction, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." The idea seems to have entered most thoroughly into the instincts, the convictions, and the moral sense of mankind, everywhere. Run down the line of patriarchal life, and see how this great function of con-

jugal life is everywhere insisted upon, in all simplicity, and with deep moral sensibility. "I will make thee exceedingly fruitful," is the divine promise to Abraham, "and I will make nations of thee." When the family of Laban was on the eve of sending forth their sister Rebekah, to become the wife of Isaac, this was the blessing pronounced upon her, "Thou art our sister; be thou the mother of thousands of millions." The Jewish women, from the days of Jacob, coveted the increase of their households, and prayed to God for the gift of children. This was the supplication of Rebekah. This, too, was the entreaty of Hannah. And when you look through the Psalms of David, and read his frequent thanksgivings for a numerous offspring, the utterance, for instance, of Psalm cxxvii, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord. . . . Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with their enemies in the gate"; or the joyous song in Psalm cxxviii, "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways. . . . Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord:"—when you see this exultation for the gift of children, you should remember that David's rejoicing was but the expression of the delight of universal Jewish womanhood for the privilege and the blessing of fruitfulness and maternity.

Why did God put this reproductive desire in the nature of man? Why, in all lands, do men desire the responsibility of fatherhood? Why is there in woman, even from girlhood, the anxiousness for maternity? I have already pointed out two of the ultimate ends of this instinct, viz., the generation of children, the perpetuity of the race. But I am referring now to the original and primary causes for this fashioning of our nature. And I can only say, that we have no clear revelation upon this point, only hints and gleamings, here and there in Scripture; and hence cannot speak with the certainty of the inspired word. With these hints and gleamings there are some natural suggestions which seem to me conclusive.

The existence of spiritual beings, whether men or angels, is but a recent, not an eternal fact. Through interminable ages, the Almighty dwelt alone in the luminous grandeur of the Godhead; but at a given point, which marks the commencement of time, He saw fit to eschew His solitude of being; and by a grand creative act He peopled, at once, the heavens above with angels and archangels, and the earth below with men and women. The angels above have no productive powers; but man is made a fertile creature, and is possessed with the gift of fecundity. And, in this *one* feature of his constitution, he is superior to the angels. For I take it that the capacity by which any beings are

enabled to generate spiritual creatures, to bring them into existence, to train them up to the services of life, to fit them for the noble cares and responsibilities of the Family, the State, and the Church, for the callings of statesmanship and science, for law and divinity, for grand perils and heroic duties; and which has scattered all along the line of history the bright names which adorn humanity,—such a capacity is, I say, secondary to the creative power of God. Such is the faculty of human generation. No other spiritual beings besides man possess it. There are, it is said, seven orders of angels. But they each stand up unfertile in individual loneliness of being. Man is endowed with the powers of reproduction, which is somewhat akin to creative power. And, it is a faculty, which not only stretches out in its influences, through time, but it reaches over to eternity; for, as “the Church on earth is replenished by the children of Christian parents, and as from the visible, will be selected the invisible church of the redeemed, so human marriage is instrumental in adding to the family of heaven.”

And thus we see what a noble gift is the generative power of man, and how exalted are the functions of marriage. At the same time it should be noticed, that woman's place in this transaction is the grandest. She is the mother. She is the main agent in the office of generation. In her person centre the greater, higher

elements of birthdom. She is the grand instrument in the process of begetting living and immortal beings, who shall never die! This is the grand prerogative of womanhood, and its special moral superiority!

And what a rebuke is not this aspect of this subject to those gross principles and practices which have crept into society, upon this whole subject of child-bearing and the increase of family. Never before in the history of the church has such a spectacle been witnessed by the angels above, as the aversion which is boldly avowed, by a large class of Christian women, to the function of maternity. But added to this, there can be no doubt, is the wide-spread endeavor, by unnatural mothers, to resist the commands of nature, and to turn their own bodies into the graves of their unborn infants.

Infanticide has been, we know, the practice of heathen mothers from immemorial times; but always, be it remembered, through ignorance, or superstition, or the demands of a false religion. But it has been left to our times, for Christian women, through the demands of fashion or the love of ease, to turn back the tide of nature; to choose death in the place of life; and by deliberate murder to deny themselves the tender offices of the breast, and to deafen their ears to the sweet prattlings of infancy.

No argument is needed to prove that all this is cruel and unnatural. No epithets are too severe for this

great and crying crime. Nothing can palliate it. Every woman who arrives at maturity, and enters the holy estate of matrimony, knows its duties, demands, and requirements. And with this knowledge comes, not only the privilege, but the duty of choice. If women are unwilling to meet the obligations of marriage, they have no right to assume its vows and promises, and to claim its rights. Nothing, next to the love and service of God, is more solemn and more obligatory than the covenant of marriage. It is the grand fountain of homes and families; of States and commonwealths; of churches and heavenly societies. What can be more gross, what more destructive, than to undertake its responsibilities, regardless of the two great factors which God Himself has laid down as the basis of this institution—love and maternity? And hence it is that our Church, with a solemnity, deep as that at a funeral, bids every man and woman to remember “that this estate is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God.”

3. I cannot close my subject, this morning, without offering a few remarks upon the preparations which become, and which are befitting, matrimony. I use the word preparations purposely; for I think that the marriage of children, and especially of daughters, is not a matter which should be left to chance, or hap-hazard, or

girlish caprice. Marriage is the normal state of humanity; and therefore all parents should carefully bring up their children, sons and daughters alike, with an eye to the probability that they will go out of their homes to form new ones, and to establish other households. And therefore (a.) I would enjoin upon all parents the careful moral training of their children, as an absolute necessity to comfort and concord, when they assume conjugal ties. When I speak of moral training I include the idea of mental discipline; for such is the action and reaction of the brain and the spirit, such the regulative power of the intellect in regard to principles, habits, and the will, that there can be no lofty moral training, unless there be, with it, the cultivation of the mind. Train your daughters and your sons "in the way they should go." Accustom them to right principles upon life and duty. Cultivate in them the sentiments of honor, truth, and virtue. Instil in your sons such strong veracity that they will never tell a lie. Graft such thorough purity in the minds of your girls that chastity will become an instinctive tendency. Crown all with the love and fear of God in Christ.

Such youth is sure to make beautiful wives and noble husbands; and, if blessed with children, to transmit the virtues of their own parents to children's children. But this, be it remembered, is no hap-hazard and fortuitous thing. It is the work of parents in the

family ; not of divided counsels, either,—one parent for God, and the other stout for the devil ; but of the united counsels of father and mother, anxious for the glory of God, and the transmission, through a godly seed, of godliness and virtue, to distant generations.

(b.) Added to this duty of training is the deep obligation of industry, as a part of the preparatory education of children. I would fain enjoin this as a *human* obligation, irrespective of sex. I do not insist upon it because we are a poor people, but because it is a duty for all, whether rich or poor. There can be no health, no greatness, no prosperity, no superiority of brain or body, of the individual or the family, without willing, active industry. It must be willing. It must be spontaneous. A girl brought up in laziness cannot suddenly be changed into a neat wife and a tidy housekeeper. A boy accustomed to habitual laziness can not be turned, in a moment, into a thrifty, prudent, painstaking husband. Marriage works no such miracles as these. And therefore if you would have your sons stirring, active, saving, self-dependent husbands, and your daughters faithful, economical wives, fix the habits of industry in them from early youth, and teach them to regard all labor as honorable. No matter what may be your possessions, teach them that work is the heritage, work is the calling and the duty of all of God's creatures ; the only solid foundation for success and pres-

perity. Give your children these habits, and then we shall hear no more the foolish demand that young men must be rich before they can marry; no more will indolent women be money-seekers in the matrimonial market; no longer shall we have to regret the infrequency of marriages in society; no longer shall we behold, in our large cities, hosts of refined, virtuous, and cultivated women unsolicited in marriage, growing old in maidenly loneliness; but our young people, everywhere, prompted by love, trusting to faithful industry, practising plain living, and holding on to simple habits, will form the alliances to which nature prompts them; and beautiful households will spring up on every side.

Closely allied to industry, as a preparation for married life, (c.) is the necessity of self-restraint. Think of the fact that fully one-third of human life is the state of nonage. Why has the Almighty made our minority so long? What is the reason that God holds us back for so long a time? Evidently because human beings must serve an apprenticeship, before they are fit for responsible duty. Youth—that is, boyhood and girlhood—is the season of discipline; the period of restraint and subjection wherein we learn to control ourselves, to keep the body under, in preparation for manhood and womanhood. How many persons use the youth of their children to this end? Why, in a majority of families, children dress as they please, go where they please,

eat and drink what they please. Instead of curb and guidance, there is independence and license. And the whole tendency of this lawless latitude is to unfit them for married life when they reach their majority. Without doubt, this is one leading cause why so many young men and women remain unmarried. In the case of men it is discoverable in the fact that parents suffer them, as boys, to contract habits of indolence, dandyism, self-indulgence, and drinking; so that thinking young women and prudent mothers conclude that these beggarly spendthrifts, with luxurious habits but with no pockets, will never be able to support a family, but will more likely bring a woman to ruin or the grave. So, on the other hand, even girls in families are brought up to ease and luxury by over-fond mothers and foolish fathers; taught dancing and music at the expense of hard-working parents, but not taught to work; dressing at the height of fashion and to the verge of propriety; running the round of winter amusements without care or responsibility; until young men conclude that such simple, doubtful creatures will never make domesticated wives, and that they are utterly unfit, morally and physically, to become mothers. Or, on the other hand, if a decent, responsible man does marry such a thriftless and immodest woman, there is no possibility of living with a wasteful, prodigal, self-willed and lawless companion.

And so, too, if a virtuous, high-minded, ambitious

woman does marry such a worthless coxcomb as I have described, she has to take the place of both man and woman, and, as is too often the case, bear, for a few years, a crushing burden, which lays her down in a premature grave. My own observation leads me to the conclusion that this latter is more frequently the case. Trifling, showy girls frequently sober into painstaking and faithful wives; but your wild, rakish husband keeps on in the line of continuity, and begets children in his own likeness, and puts them on his own crooked and ruinous tracks! The root of this disease is to be found in the unrestraint and license given to boys and girls during their minority. Ungoverned girlhood, unruly boyhood are pretty sure to crop out into careless womanhood and brutal manhood. If you would raise up for the future, good wives and husbands, teach your children while young to want little, to keep their bodies under, to restrain their passions, to practise economy, to dress plainly, to avoid the stimulants which produce premature passions, to place themselves under the control of reason, to practise the principles of virtue, to live according to the dictates of piety and religion. Such a life, and only such a life, will afford the foundation on which they will be able to build a mature, a sober, and a godly manhood.

I make no apology for the train of thought which I have presented to your consideration, nor for the plainness of speech I have used. "To the pure all things

are pure ;” and “what God hath cleansed,” that no man has the right to regard as common or unclean. I am aware that the subject of marriage is but seldom spoken of from the pulpit, and that still more seldom do ministers speak of the functions of marriage, and the duty of maternity. But the Church speaks very clearly and pointedly upon the subject, and I am but an obedient servant, to-day, in uttering her voice. I regret that there are so few marriages that take place in society. I believe it to be the duty of parents to see to the marriage of their daughters. I think it is their duty, in simplicity of living, and by social life and entertainment, to encourage the marriage of their children. Marriage, I beg to say here, is a duty. I think young women, even by the eccentricity of plainness of appearance and sweetness of character, should strive to remove some of the obstacles which hinder men from marriage. And I think young men should have the boldness and manliness to enter upon married life in a simple, undorned, and quiet manner, mindless of style and the requirements of fashion, relying upon the loving hearts, the trustful faith, and the willing industry of scores of beautiful women, who, both by character and intellect, would adorn the homes of princes. I speak all this in the interest of society, of virtue, of chastity, of pure and undefiled religion ; and may God bless it to the young of both sexes, to your families, to this Church, and to His own glory.

SERMON IV.

(*Passion Sunday.*)

ST. JOHN, I, 29.

THE LAMB OF GOD.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

These are wonderful words, my brethren, and they fell from the lips of John the Baptist. But it is a matter of prime importance that you should notice that they were spoken to Jewish people; for, otherwise, it would be quite difficult to understand their deep and marvellous import. The region where these words were spoken was on the western side of Jordan, in a district of rivulets and streams, where hills lifted up their heads on every side, and a wide wilderness lay stretched out over a large district of country.

All through this neighborhood the tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin lived for centuries, built their towns and cities, and multiplied into a large and crowded population. But amid much material prosperity, the Israelitish people had declined in national spirit and religious purity and simplicity. At this time the Almighty

raised up a prophet among them of a force, authority, and power unlike and superior to any that had appeared among them for centuries. Casting aside as superfluous the luxurious habits of the age, he lived in the wilderness a life of the most rigid simplicity and the severest abstinence. He went everywhere, calling the people to repentance, and warning them of the threatened wrath of God. His voice was like a trumpet, and his words were words of fire, as he preached in the ears of men, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Such an extraordinary preacher as this broke up the stillness of dull, ordinary life, and disturbed the stagnancy of customary guilt and depravity. The population of the whole neighborhood poured out to see and hear this wondrous prophet. Multitudes confessed their sins, and besought of him "the baptism of repentance" in the waters of Jordan.

It was in a scene of this kind,—the crowds of anxious Jews surrounding him, eager inquiries put to him by repentant men and women, sinners standing around with baptismal waters still dripping from their brows, that the fact occurred which is spoken of in the text. A pause takes place in the busy life of the Baptist; and his attention is called away to a majestic and shining presence coming toward him. Then he sees approaching him that "flower of perfect humanity," that one only specimen of ineffable purity, the man Christ Jesus.

Immediately all duty and service come to an end. Struck with awe and admiration, the Baptist himself is transformed. The hard, rough words of his tongue vanish in an instant; and with mingled wonder and reverence he points out to the multitude the grand godly personage who draws nigh to him, in these words of transcendent beauty and significance, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!"

Now observe that the Baptist was speaking to a people addicted, through all their generations, to the practice of sacrifice. For more than a thousand years, under the Mosaic covenant, under which they were then living, the offering up of lambs and other animals, had been an unfailing custom. The custom in their blood and kindred had been older than this. It had come down 2,000 years before the time of Moses, from their Father Abraham. Nay, the Jews could trace it still further back, in their line and lineage, even than to Abraham's day. Sacrifice was the custom of their ancestors in the line of Seth, clear up to the days of Noah; and we all know that it anticipated the Noachic covenant, that it came down to that patriarch from Father Adam, from the very outer gates of Eden.

When, then, John the Baptist pointed out the Messiah to the Jews as "the Lamb of God," they well understood the import of his words. His speech was indeed a very brief one; but it included large histories, and the expect-

tations of centuries, the hopes of generations, the custom of a long line of patriarchs and fathers, and the strongest religious instinct and demand of wide humanity. It was in effect just this meaning and teaching.—“You are looking for the Messiah; you are daily offering up your sacrifices of lambs and goats as a token of the great expected sacrifice, which is to give freedom and salvation to Israel. Lo! here is the hope of the ages. “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!”

The subject suggested by the text divides itself into two sections:—The first, the person presented to our notice and regard, and second, the duty which appertains to Him.

1. “Behold the Lamb of God.” It is a specific object, you will observe, (a) *the* Lamb of God; *the* one offering, separate from every other which had ever been laid upon an altar to propitiate an offended Deity. And (b) that one only sacrifice as able to “take away the sin of the world.”

And this statement traced to its final issue, is the affirmation made for centuries by rite, ceremony, and sacrifices to the Jews especially, but to *all* the tribes of men by less vivid, but equally certain instincts and religious customs; the affirmation, namely, that “without shedding of blood there is no remission” of sins.

This is the idea which fills the Baptist’s mind in

pointing out the Messiah. To the Jewish mind his words implied a contrast between *their* sacrifices, only symbolical, and the one true only sacrifice then standing in their midst—the Saviour of sinners.

In just this way John the Baptist speaks to us this day. To our sight he points out the Lamb of God. Into our ears, into the depths of our consciousness he pours the truth of the universe, that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission” of sins.

Let us ponder over this vital principle. Let us endeavor to see if this same Saviour is not our greatest and most pressing need.

The question of sin, *i.e.*, of the reality of it, we will not discuss. Every man knows its existence, knows too that it is not an original tendency; not a primitive and natural state in the constitution of man. For every man knows that confusion is not a first principle in God's economy; that disorder is not a primitive element. And sin we know is both disorder and confusion. Sin is an abnormal and degenerate state. How then are we to be saved from sin?

There is but one alternative. We must either save ourselves from the taint and penalty of sin, or else we must be saved by a Being both fit and able to save us.

We cannot save ourselves. Human inability to the salvation of the soul is the confession of the whole world. Every one knows the insufficiency of man even

for the care and preservation of the lower, animal life, God has given us. We come into life weak, helpless little babes ; and our life is in the tender care of others. All through life we are kept from ruin, from starvation, from dangers, disease, and death, by the intervention and the self-sacrifice of our fellow creatures. The principle of mediation, in its lower sense, mingles with our whole life from the cradle to the grave. No man stands up altogether by himself, sufficient for himself in all things, anywhere on earth. . Some one, nay, many persons all through our life, have to interpose good offices that we may not want, and suffer, and die. Our mothers suffer for us, that we may come into life ; our parents undergo pains and trial that we may reach manhood and secure success ; our teachers and our friends have to bear and endure to the end, that we may be built up and achieve prosperity and position in life.

Thus we see that no man can save himself, even with regard to our lower, physical life in this world. We are saved very largely by others.

But if this be true in regard to this lower life of ours, how overwhelmingly so is it with respect to that inner life which pertains to the soul ? Who of the sons of men ever had the power to break the iron fetters of sin ? To cast off the thralldom of guilt ? To secure the glorious freedom of innocence and purity ?

Take up the history of man, and what do we find *the*

master question in all the nationalities of men but the one grand query, "What can we do with sin?" Everywhere on earth, whether it be in the classic nations of Greece and Rome, or among the luxurious people of the East, or the savage tribes of Africa, or the wild inhabitants of the islands of the seas; sacrifices of beasts and birds, aye, even of men, women, and children, attest the troubled heart of humanity under the harassing burden of sin, and the agonizing but vain attempt to get rid of its troubles and its tortures. Sacrifices are always confessions, not infrequently expressions of contrition.

The revelation of the Scriptures turns us from the fruitless efforts of man, for salvation, to the power and the victory of the Son of man, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." It tells us that while the power of man is useless, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is all powerful and effective.

Just here we are met by a school of thought, cool, heady, and dogmatic, which denies the need and efficacy of blood to propitiate sin; and which claims, moreover, that by the aid of reason alone it can attain virtue below the skies. This school sets itself against all the traditions, all the histories, all the expiatory customs of the world, and refuses to allow them any abiding religious significance. If Theodore Parker were living to-day he would reject the sacrificial customs of the Jews as

superstition. And to your appeal this morning to the Lamb of God, that "by His agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, His precious death and burial, He would deliver us," the pious and gentle Channing would turn away with horror, and tell you that the "very idea was appalling!"

But neither sentiment nor speculation can subvert a fact, nor weaken the ideas which underlie that fact. The fact, next to the idea of God, is as large a one as ever presented itself in the realm of thought and in the province of experience. Its proportions are indeed prodigious. It is so immense a fact that no one single line of thought could ever distinctly express it. It comes to us in divergent lines of testimony.

1. Look at it first historically. The whole history of man from the creation shows the deep conviction of humanity, everywhere, that "without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin. The idea of expiation is inextricably intermingled with all the history, poetry, religious worship and priestly offices of all the tribes and nations of men. The mangled bodies of sacrifices, the blood of victims, are a constant and a ghastly spectacle in the annals of our race. The sacrificial idea is as old as humanity, and as wide and far-reaching as the history of man.

2. Turn to the providential expression of the same idea. See how the Almighty Himself has put this prin-

ciple of expiation into the very histories of men, into the policies and currents of national life; so that men may not possibly escape its teachings. We see the fact in all the providential events of human being. It is God's finger in all human story. The instances are almost innumerable; but a few conspicuous cases stand out in bold relief, and speak with telling utterance.

When, in the early history of man, the world had corrupted its way in the earth, and all virtue had fled, the blood of man was exacted in expiation, and Noah and his family alone escaped.

The abominations of Egyptian bondage, for more than two hundred years, became so enormous that it could only go out with a judgment that brought death to every household and woe to every heart therein.

For centuries the nobles and kings of France set at nought every principle of duty and obligation, and rioted in profligacy and corruption, until at last every thing declined, and the end had come. And how did it come? It came in the earthquake and the hurricane, in the hail-storm, and in the shivering, blasting lightning of revolution; and the nobility and gentry of France were swept away as with the besom of destruction, and the blood of kings and queens and gentle princes flowed like water.

For more than two hundred years the people of this land maintained the most grinding tyranny that ever

existed beneath the sun, determined to the last to uphold it, by law and interest, by philosophy and power, and, added thereto, by the authority of Scripture. But at last the time of its end came, and everything was done to close it up, if it were possible, without suffering or disaster. But neither reason nor philosophy, law nor statesmanship, compromise nor policy, could avail. The time had come! "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin. The sin of the land called for blood, and blood had to flow for the wiping out its deadly stains. On the battle fields of the South the best and choicest blood of every section drenched, for years, the very sod which, for centuries, had been moistened by the black man's blood, and crimsoned its streams and rivers. And so sore and terrible was the disaster that there was a great cry in all the land. "For there was not a house where there was not one dead;" and mourning was in every household. And so the sin of this country went out in agony and blood! And then God closed up the book of national expiation by the most terrible tragedy known in all its history. In the very moment of victory, at the first breathing-time in a four-years' stretch of misery and bloodshed, the Chief Magistrate of the country was hurried into eternity by the pistol-shot of defeated but frenzied and demoniac slavery! And so God taught the people that blood must flow for sin. And so the sin of the nation vanished forever!

3. The word of God is most distinct in its setting forth the idea of sacrifice. The practice itself began in the very infancy of the race, and there can be no doubt that it was by divine command. It was the religion of Abel, of Noah, and of Abraham. It was the practice of all the patriarchs, under divine direction. It was enforced again upon the Jewish people, upon their first setting up their religion, as a national institution, in the wilderness. It comes out with organic distinctness in the Mosaic Ritual, under the explicit command of Jehovah, and perpetuated, moreover, in a priestly line to the time of Christ. The principle and the duty are declared with burning vividness in the prophetic writings, which glow with the reflex lustre which comes from the cross of Christ, seen in the distance, and from which they derived their grand significance. All through the Old Testament this principle of sacrifice accompanied with commands, injunctions, regulations, and systematic observances; daily, weekly, monthly, and annually, declares or sets forth the sacredness of a divine principle and the authorization of the Deity Himself.

And now, my friends, I am unable to see how any tender sensibility, any force of reasoning, can possibly break down these deep convictions of humanity and this most manifest law of nature's God. Here we have the concurrent testimony of universal human conviction, the religious instinct of the entire race of man, and the

undoubted will of God that guilt demands the expiation of blood. It is not only a law of natural religion, not only the teaching of Providence, but the positive declaration of the revealed will of God.

And I stand upon these convictions, and maintain these teachings. Nor can I suffer any mere speculation to relax my hold upon them. I grant, indeed, that I am not able to point out the specific relation of blood to the principle of atonement. That is a mystery which the Almighty has not seen fit to set forth, in its entirety, to human comprehension. But the mystery which is wound up in a fact cannot destroy that fact, because it is a mystery. Here is a principle that lies imbedded in the deepest regions of our nature, showing itself in all periods of time, allied to all the religions of men, and running parallel with the most positive features of God's rule in this world, and the plainest teachings of His Holy Word; and we are called upon to renounce it because of its seeming divergence from the philosophy or the civilization of the age. But I must hold on to a universal religious instinct, which is testified by all the world; for, if in no other way, its universality is a proof of its verity and its integrity. And I regard of far more value the teachings of the threefold witnesses—the human conscience, the Divine Providence, and the Holy Word—than all the speculations of philosophers.

We turn once more to the scriptural aspects of the subject. They show us everywhere the rigidity of law coming down from the throne of the universe, refusing all compromise with iniquity, demanding retribution for sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die!" "God will by no means clear the guilty."

It reveals to us another aspect of the Divine government. God's rule of the world is as much a rule of mercy as it is of justice and of law. He knew not only man's inability to obedience, but also his incapability of atoning for sin. Therefore He sent His only Son "a propitiation for our sins." Read the book of Leviticus. Read the prophets. Read the Gospels. Read the Epistles of St. Paul; and see everywhere the one single predominant principle of expiation, from Genesis to Revelation. See how, for thousands of years, at first darkly and by signs, until the "fulness of the times," but, in the latter ages of the world, in the clearest and most distinct manner, God has set forth Jesus Christ, His only Son, born of a Virgin, the one great sacrifice for sins. John the Baptist declared the whole doctrine of sacrifice in that remarkable passage in the third chapter of St. John, a passage which remains for aye the wonder of the Church; his knowledge of the atonement seeming as distinct and luminous as that of St. Paul. The Lord Jesus announced it constantly during His ministry, not merely with pro-

phetic, but pre-eminently with divine emphasis and authority, up to the very tragedy of Calvary. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so shall the Son of Man be lifted up." "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." And then, after our Lord's Ascension, His apostles preached everywhere the same living and abiding truth to people of every clime and name, as the one grand condition of salvation: "Christ died for sinners." "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin." "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust."

2. And now that the Lamb of God *is* pointed out to our sight and held up to our view, what are we to do with respect to Him?

There is but one requirement in the text, and that declares the grand spiritual requirement of the soul. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Yes, plain, simple, trivial as it seems, yet all man has to do is to look and to see. Surely, you can understand this. Is it not clear and certain that the Divine Father would have us look no longer anywhere else in the universe save to His blessed Son? And is it not true that the eye of man's soul does wander, the world over, for safety, save to the Son of Man?

But now the invitation comes to every soul, "Behold the Lamb of God." Summon all the scattered,

wasted powers of your heart, and fasten them upon the Christ. He is able and willing to save every man from himself and from his sins, in time and for eternity.

You ask, perchance, have we nothing to do but to look? And what is there in looking that can serve to change the heart or save the soul?

Why, don't you see that if you sit and gaze upon the Lamb of God, look with all your heart, and mind, and soul, look with all your sorrow and desires, look with all your tears and all your longings upon your Saviour, that this is believing in Him and accepting Him as your Master and your all?

Salvation comes by looking. Sight is the most vivid and most transforming of all our senses, the soul's mightiest organ for apprehension. "The very first lesson of Agassiz, the naturalist, to a student, was, 'Take that fish and look at it.' And the whole work of that student for three days was to look at it. Artists and painters who wish to get the true insight from a picture sit, day after day, and look at it." So the Bible teaches us that by beholding a thing we become like unto it. Thus, beholding the Lamb of God saves men. If you want salvation, look to Jesus.

What else, I ask, can faith be but this absorbing, looking, fastening of the soul upon its Lord and King, undisturbed and undistracted by anything else, lost in the crucified One? Is it not thus in all our loves and friendships and our faith, with men, with women, and

children? How comes the man to love the maiden and to trust her? He looks, and looks, and looks, and her image enters his soul, and love sits master in his being. What is the first desire of the mother with her newborn babe but to see it? And then she looks and looks, until its innocent face enters the core of her heart, and she is swept away with the floods of maternal love.

Thus, too, with the Lamb of God, our Saviour; but with the stronger currents of our souls and the penitential sorrows of our hearts.

“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world?” Have you sins? Have you guilt? Have you wretchedness? Have you sorrows, soul-sickness and despair? Look to Jesus and be saved! Don’t look to the world! Don’t look to yourself! Don’t look at your sins! Get away, and at once, to the “Lamb of God.” He alone can save you. Behold the Lamb of God! Put your heart in your eyes. Put your eyes upon your Lord. Keep Him ever in your sight. And thus looking, gazing, lost in the sight and contemplation of your Redeemer, the whole vision, power, and preciousness of the Lord shall enter into your being. His beauty shall ravish you. His love shall subdue you. All your guilt and depravity shall depart. His look shall drive them away. All your sorrows and your cares, your miseries and anguish shall vanish. “Behold the Lamb of God,” for “He taketh away the sin of the world!”

SERMON V.

Easter.

RISING WITH CHRIST.

COL. III : I.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

The term Easter, which is the title of the Festival which we are now celebrating, is derived from Eostre, the name of the old goddess of light and illumination among the early British people. In the early ages of Christianity, even pagan customs, if they were innocent, were allowed observance by Christians. And so the Resurrection, coinciding, that is, in time, with the ancient British festival, eventually displaced it; put aside entirely the heathen notions associated with it; introduced at the same time the lofty Christian idea of this season, but carrying off the old name, and putting it to a noble Christian use. The appropriation thus made is an honoring one. Easter is indeed the festival of light and illumination. All things divine and heavenly, all the ideas which are bright and celestial are associated with it. It is the spring by which, as by a sudden bound,

mankind is privileged to rise from the earthly and carnal, to the ethereal, the invisible, the eternal. It is the triumph of the supernatural over the temporal. By the Resurrection of our Lord, we are advanced in fact, in idea, and in prerogative, from the dominion of earth and sense, to that vast, wider world of perfect men and holy angels; of God eternal and ineffable; of holy truth and everlasting light and glory. And hence it is that the poet sings :

The day of resurrection !
Earth, tell it out abroad !
The Passover of gladness,
The Passover of God !
From death to life eternal,
From this world to the sky,
Our Christ hath brought us over,
With hymns of victory.

It is with such vivid, glowing ideas of our Lord's rising that the apostle gives us the exhortation of the text. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The assumption of the apostle is, that we *have* risen with Christ; the inference he draws from it is, that, by virtue of our union and communion with Him, we must keep up our connection with the upper world of light and glory, by faith. "Christ," he says, "is advanced to the highest dignity and honor in Heaven. That is the spot where our hearts and affections are to be centred;

from whence, even here on earth, we are to draw all the power of our existence, all the stimulants to activity, all the light and glory of our spiritual being."

In considering the Apostle's words, let us go back a little, and think upon the *need* of the charge given us in the text. That charge is to *rise*. Is there any need for it? Do we not all know this deep necessity of human being? Are we not all low? Is not debasement the saddest element of our every being? Is not degeneracy the common universal taint of our humanity? The need for man to rise, discovers itself, *first* of all, by a general view of human kind. We see indeed, every where on earth, the signs of human superiority. We see civilization, enlightenment, letters, and government. And we see very often the tokens of self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency, in the possession of them, and in their bright show. But, after all, nothing can hide the fact of man's discontent amid the very best earthly circumstances; and for the very reason that there abides with him always the conviction that he is down, that inferiority taints every fibre of his nature; that obliquity discovers itself in every joint and sinew of his constitution. He strives indeed after somewhat more elevating and superior, because he is the image of God, tarnished and effaced though it be; but yet his struggles are hindered by the clogs, the weights, and the grossness of his sinful nature; just as Milton represents—

The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts.——

half animal, and half earth. So earth, and an earth-bound nature, clearly set forth to every one of us the sinful abjectness of man.

The general fact is also the individual personal experience. That man does not know a single section of his heart who has not discovered his own special degeneracy. All the laws of civil society, all the statutes of states and nations, all the treaties between nationalities, imply, in their very structure, a state of human depravity which is to be guarded against, warded off or punished. All the histories of men, with their dark pages, and their saddening tales and memoirs, are so many biographies of a fallen, sin-burdened being. Every man that ever lived, if you could get at his life, would reveal to you his confession of moral defectiveness. Even where there is pretence to superiority, as in the case of the Cæsars and the Napoleons, you will not have to wait long before you see not only the personal depravity, but you will also *hear*, if even unguardedly, the acknowledgement of unsoundness or moral weakness. And when there is no open avowal, we get the tacit assent to the lowness of sinful man in their subterfuge; in the attempt to hide their guilt; in their hypocrisies; in their guile and their deceit. The testimony is an universal personal one, that man has made a most calamitous descent from original righteousness, to sinful degradation.

Again we see the necessity of man to rise, by the very defeats he meets with, in all his endeavors after excellence. For the corrupt and carnal man has, not seldom, aspirations after truth and goodness. He sees the right, and often pines, and sighs, and struggles for it. And here we make a discovery which shows itself at every period of life and among all peoples, that is, the attempted flight of the soul after things unearthly and celestial, with the failure to reach them and the despair that follows. Little children striving to be truthful, girls and boys endeavoring to be honest and virtuous, men and women aiming after rectitude and uprightness, and yet lapsing, stumbling, falling away into vice and depravity, and oftentimes exclaiming in utter hopelessness, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" Just as I saw, last spring, a little bird escaped from its cage, flying about in La Fayette Park. It was unused to long ventures of flight, and one wing was broken; so that, every time it attempted an upward rise, it was beaten back by the strong currents of the breeze; and the little thing would fall upon the grass, and pant and moan with its unusual exertions, and at last settled down on the earth to die.

2. We have need then to rise. There is a constitutional paralysis, from which it becomes us, as moral agents, to escape; and, on the other hand, there is a

divine integrity, to which it is every way our duty and our advantage to reach forward. Consider, for a few moments, the somewhat and the whither to which we should endeavor, as disciples, to rise. My answer is, to things divine and heavenly. "Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." He explains his own meaning. "For ye are dead," he says. Dead! Dead to what? Dead, that is, to things present. Dead to earthly things. Every Christian is crucified unto the world, and the world crucified unto him. This is both our profession and our obligation. By putting on Christ in baptism we have declared ourselves members of a heavenly society, under the control of supernatural ideas and principles, reaching forth to realities beyond the range of time and sense. If the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Spirit, *has* done anything effectual in our souls, *then*, by the power of His resurrection, He has raised us to a higher plane of being than that we had by nature.

And that is the very object of Christianity. Its purpose is to put the kingdom of heaven *within* us. Its especial significance is a personal divine and spiritual reality within us. And when you consider how low and abject we were by sin, you can judge the elevation we needed to bring us consciously into the realities of the kingdom of God's grace. Look at what is implied in this spiritual elevation of our nature.

(a) First of all, it signifies our reaching after and grasping divine principles and convictions. Here is the radical defect of our disorganized nature ; and here, too, is the very first start of our nature to spiritual superiority. The depravity of man is noted in disregard or indifference to divine truth. His fall, at the start, was his falling away from the glorious principles which center in the Godhead and stream from the person of the Deity. And the sin of man continues in just this same obliquity, namely, an aversion to divine principles and convictions.

Men are influenced and governed by inclination, by selfishness, by desire, by passion, and not by truth. Appetite and lust are the main stimulants of their being, not the divine law. Motives that are carnal and sensual sway their being, but not the divine commandments ; not the celestial ideas which come from the throne of God.

And as in the past, so everlastingly, man must remain low and grovelling, until, by some divine influence, he reaches forth to an actual reception of the truth. This is the very first movement of our being toward superiority. It is thus in all things. Even in temporal matters there can be no possible advance without the grasp of fundamental ideas. Your children cannot reach attainments in the simplest elements of education until they come to some acquaintance with first principles, whether in

arithmetic, or grammar, or geography. This is a law of our nature in all its departments. Excellence is first rooted in truths. Preëminence springs from ideas. Elevation is the product and outgrowth of convictions. This principle reaches its highest expression in religion. To rise from sin, to get away from grossness and degradation, demands, as a primary condition, that we receive into our bosoms the strength and the assurance of divine convictions. Somewhat of the heavenly must become incorporated with our nature before we can reach to the place where Christ sitteth on His eternal throne. It is only by this grasping of divine principles and convictions, with the rejection of mere earthly motives, that man can thus be lifted up to the heavens. This reception of God's truth *is*, indeed, our entrance into the kingdom of heaven, and the entrance of the kingdom of heaven into us.

For, observe, (1) supernatural truth comes from God; and (2) it is put into us by a divine operation, that is, through the agency of the Holy Ghost. Thus, severally, the *personality of God* is a divine principle; and it comes from God. It cannot be derived from any other source. The *moral responsibility* of man is a divine principle. The fact of its reality, its force and persistency come from God. The doctrine and the experience of *divine grace* is a principle, is a fact which includes both the Atonement of the Cross and the gift of the Holy

Ghost, and it springs everlastingly from the heart of God. And the principle of *everlasting life* originates, as from its fontal source, in that supreme existence, of Whom St. John tells us, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

But note that these divine principles not only come to us, but, when received by the spirit, that they lift us up. I care not how grovelling a man may have been, how sensual, or how beastly. If you once get the ideas of God, responsibility, heavenly grace, and a future life gladly and joyously to absorb his attention and to circle his brain, is not that man raised to heaven? When John Bunyan pictures to us the man absorbed in a worthless muck-rake, and an angel standing beside him offering a golden crown, what is it that we then see but the carnal, godless man lost in sin and depravity? But reverse the picture. See the man, like Bunyan himself, cast away the muck-rake, and then madly and with a whole heart strive to gain the crown of heaven. Do you not see that heaven itself has transformed that man into something celestial and divine? There is no need of a change in such a man's locality. He may stand on the same spot on which he was born into this world; he may have the same surroundings; he may have the same poverty; he may live in the same body, and that body poor, weak, miserable, and dying; but immediately he receives the grand truths of God's revelation, he

undergoes that marvelous transformation by which he is changed from darkness to light; a transformation whereby he is cut off from the society of the perverse and lawless, and becomes "a fellow citizen of the saints and of the household of God." It is this seizure upon divine truth, this apprehension of heavenly ideas, which has brought out of the world this whole grand kingdom of God, made up of pure and godly men and women, of every clime and nation in all the ages; part of whom are in Paradise, and part still militant on earth; "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," and so by truth uplifted to heavenly things in Christ.

(b) But besides the reception of divine principles, another section of our nature must needs be touched, in order to our spiritual uplifting. To rise with Christ we need the sanctification of our feelings and aspirations. We have a whole apparatus of senses and sensibilities, which more or less influence even the saints of God. With the world they assert supremacy. The masses of men who live without God and without hope deliver themselves up to desire. What the carnal nature craves for, it gets. Partial restraint upon nature *is* yielded by a sense of respectability, or from pride and ambition. But take the world as it comes and goes, and men are satisfied to be governed by sense, to be swayed by feeling, to reach forth after the things which minister to

delight and selfish gratification. Among the rude and vulgar the agencies used for satisfaction are, like themselves, rude and vulgar. Among the refined and cultivated the instrumentalities employed for delight are of a different and a higher nature. But, alien from God, men of high degree and men of low degree are content to give themselves up to desire, to stretch forth the hands of the soul for the objects which minister enjoyment and felicity.

The Christian requirement demands a revolution in this regard. It does not, indeed, command a destruction of our natural taste. What it aims after and effects is the gift and the production within us of a supernatural taste, subordinating natural desire to its own place, and giving to our inward consciousness a divine appetite and a heavenly yearning for spiritual things. This sanctification of the feelings, the affections, and the desires, is a possibility to every soul.

First of all, it is a command of the divine word. "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth."

But second, this sanctification of our emotional nature is set before us as an example in the divine life of the model man, the Lord Jesus Christ. For He came into the world to give us the reality of the highest manhood. In Him we see the enthusiasm of our human nature for supremest excellence. His meat and His drink was to

do the will of His Father. There was in Him a craving, yearning appetite for all things high, pure, noble, lovely, and beautiful. What were the natural instincts, the bodily appetites, to *Him*? I will not say contemptible, but they were in very deed inferior and trivial. The spiritual appetites, on the other hand, were warm, glowing, ardent, rapturous. And, as expressed in Him, we see the type and model of just that spiritual desire, that affectional impulse which is to stimulate our being, as participants in the power of Jesus' resurrection.

Hence, thirdly, it must be noted that successful imitations of the emotional life of the Lord have been seen in the lives and characters of godly men in the flesh. Look at such a man as St. Paul, ardent, fiery, impulsive; pushing his own nature through sensible things, into such a state of ecstasy that he knew not whether he was in the flesh or out of it! Look at St. John the Divine; now full of the spirit of love, and reposing upon the bosom of Him who was Love; and now soaring away as an eagle, with unfailing eye, to the highest heaven, and gazing upon the Son of Man in his glory!

Let us see now, in conclusion, what we can learn from the train of thought presented this morning. And the first teaching given us is a caution. To rise with Christ, to seek the things above, is not to die and go to heaven. Many people there are who think that to attain sanctification is to get out of the flesh, and to

depart to Paradise. There is a young disciple in this city who is grievously vexed with the troubles, disturbances, and angry strife of the world and the Church of God. But she is so anxious for rest and quietude that she wants to get away from earth, and to escape all its trials and disturbances. But remember that endurance of trial is a duty, and it is through tribulation we shall gain the rest that is eternal.

Do not forget that to rise with Christ and to set our affections on things above is not a matter of locality. It is a spiritual condition. It is a divine temper. It is an unearthly sentiment, just as obligatory on the saints in earth, as upon the dwellers in Paradise, or the citizens of heaven. As disciples of Christ we are to live in the world, but to live above it! We are to reach a plane that is raised above the tastes, the appetites, the yearnings, and, above all, the atrocious principles, of a world which hates the truth as it is in Jesus.

Next to this we learn that this uplifting of the soul to heavenly places in Christ is not a thing which comes to the soul passively. All elevations in this world, all the ascents of man to superiority, challenge effort, energy, nay, at times, painful agonies. This is especially the necessity in religion. Every birth requires a travail of pain, whether it be a natural birth into this world, or a birth into the *spiritual* world by conversion, or a birth into the eternal world by the convulsive dis-

location of soul and spirit. The birth of the soul into heavenly exaltation is unattainable, save by suffering, self-sacrifice, and painful endeavor. When you look into the New Testament, and gaze with wondrous admiration at that exalted life, that unapproachable excellence which blinds by its excessive brightness, which we see in the Lord of life and glory Who died for us, it is well to remember that before He made a show of His perfectness to men, He went into the wilderness, and suffered pain, and hunger, and weariness, and temptation, and the bitter thrusts of the devil. If it was so with Christ, so must it be with you and me. Would you have ease and satisfaction, then you may not rise to the place where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. You must suffer with Him if you will be buried with Him, and rise again to His high place in glory. See how these things are allied in this religion of Jesus: spiritual activity, godly zeal, severe and painful effort, and heavenly glory, all closely connected; never separate and apart. "That I may know Him," says St. Paul, "and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." See the thorough mingling of all these elements: and remember,

Lastly, the human dignity and the high honor which are implied in the exhortation of the text. Seek the things which are above! This call to superiority is

not one that is addressed to worms or reptiles! It is not a call made to brutish animals! There is no quality of fitness in *them* for the lofty place and the grand prerogatives of the kingdom of heaven. No, the Apostle Paul speaks this morning to the spirits of immortal creatures, made in the image of God. He speaks to beings whose rank in the scale of creation is but "a little lower than the angels;" and he tells them that low and degraded as they have been brought by sad disaster, heavenly superiority is their rightful prerogative.

Creature all grandeur, son of truth and light,
Up from the dust, the last great day is bright!

Glory and honor and immortality are the franchises of faithful and devoted souls, in this world as well as in the next. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." In the Resurrection of Christ we have the promise of everything transcendent and eternal for the living spirits of men. The Resurrection of our Lord is an invitation to rise up to and to avail ourselves of all the priceless privileges of His glorious kingdom. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory!"

SERMON VI.

GLORIFYING GOD.

The fifth Sunday after the Epiphany.

I COR. VI: 20.

Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

The motive to the duty set before us in this passage, is the most solemn in the whole sum of human thought. "Ye are bought with a price," says the apostle; "therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." What more touching appeal could be addressed to any man than this, which we have already carried up to the throne of grace, to lead us to honor and glorify our Maker? For have we not this morning, and many times over, cried with loud voices to our crucified Lord—"By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy Cross and passion?" For that is the price St. Paul refers to, when he exhorts us in the text to "glorify God in our body and in our spirit."

We will bear this in mind then, all this morning, while we attempt to show how we are to set forth the glory of our Saviour Lord:—We have been purchased by the blood of the Lamb: it is therefore a reasonable service

and return that we should glorify God, in our body and our spirit, which are His.

But how are we to fulfill this duty? Let this query be the subject of consideration this morning.

1. To glorify God is to think of God. It is evident that all human actions commence in the mind of men. The mind, under some impulse or motive moves, and then the man moves. For every act is, at first, a thought. From thence come the various actions of men pertaining to their fellows; and the other actions also which refer to God. We often say that some men do not think, but it is evident that if they did not think they would not act. The remark is, without doubt, a figure of speech, meaning simply that they think in a loose, careless manner. But everybody does think. Men think about life and society, about dress and manners, about literature and science, about history and politics. But the great fault of man is, that the range of his thought is temporal and carnal. He has but the fewest flights toward the heavens. His mind is of the earth, earthy. The grand indictment against humanity is, that they "have not God in all their thoughts." And this is a great sin. Nothing can be more evident than the guilt of shutting out from the mind, the grandest Being and the noblest idea which can reach the intellect:—thought of the Infinite and Eternal One. Its sinfulness shows itself by a lower but similar transgression. What would you think of a

child who lived day by day under the blessedness and the loving care of a devoted parent, and yet from design and purpose, passed by that parent, day by day, year by year, and determinedly shut him out from all thought and consideration? How much more abominable is it for you or me to pass long years of our life, the recipient, every moment, of blessings and mercies, of gifts and benefactions and graces, from the Father of lights; and yet, by deliberate act, and the fixed will declare to Him—"Depart from me, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him?"

But yet this is one of the commonest sins of man. To ignore the God of heaven, to put aside the Almighty and the things which pertain to Him, is an every day affair,—is a life-long habit of masses of men.

First observe that a large portion of our fellow creatures drop God from their thought, passively, through neglect, without intention, with no set and formal purpose to dishonor Him, but carelessly and indifferently. Dress, fashion, pleasure, politics, literature, or lust, perchance, have become so magnified in their idea, that without reflection they thrust the small notions they have of God out of their minds, and then these other things rise up into big and overmastering magnitude.

But another class of men set God aside, purposely and deliberately. They will not have the idea of God pres-

ent in their minds. They will not let the things of God circle their brains, stimulate their lives, or influence their conduct. With some it is the flippant negation of the Divine existence, as a disturbance or a superfluity. With others it is something graver, aye, and more atrocious. It is the godless execration of Christ, and the awful declaration that they want nothing to do with this accursed religion.

But, my friends, to think carelessly of God is neglect ; to think reluctantly of Him, is vicious ; to think angrily and repulsively of Him, is monstrous, and amounts to abomination and ruin. To glorify God, then, implies as the very first thing, that we think of Him. We are to begin by opening the mind, and craving the entrance therein of the thoughts of the eternal. Think, dear friends, of the fact that there is a God—a grand personal, self-existent Being, the Maker and Sovereign of the universe. How many of you here have ever stopped and paused in life, and taken this great fact into thought and contemplation ? How many of you have ever sat down and meditated on the existence of the Deity ? How many of you “in a season of calm weather,” have withdrawn yourselves from this world of eye, and ear, and sense, and entered for a brief period into that other invisible world, which is all around us, and in us, and which stretches out into the infinitudes ; and thought on the essence, and the substance of that awful Being who fills all things ?

How many of you, on a clear silvery night, have lifted up your eyes to the glorious heavens, and striven to pierce the depths, gazing and wondering—the mind aching under the burden and the vastness of immensity;—how many of you have then thought of the mighty God, “that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth it out as a tent to dwell in?”

I have no thought of imputing to any one of you the gross mental wickedness of Atheism. It cannot be that there is a single man here this morning, who says—“There is no God!” One who ruthlessly would thrust the great God of the universe out of existence, as a thing of nought! One who, like a poor blind poet of the last century, would write upon the sands of the seashore—“Atheos!” denying the Maker of all things! I do not believe this of any man among you here this morning. It would have been better, if it were so, that you had never been born! Better you had never suckled at your mother’s breast! Better you had never felt the warm kisses of her love upon your lips and brows! No! I will not believe this of any of you. Annihilation is better than godlessness!

I believe that you had, at least, real *mental* belief, this morning, when you stood up here and confessed the faith in the creed. I believe there was a measure

of conviction in every such utterance. But this alone is not to think in sincerity and soberness of God.

To think of God aright, is to take Him, formally and solemnly, and put Him before the mind, and then to contemplate Him before and behind, in the depths and in the heights, in His attributes, in His decrees, in His covenants, in the great salvation of His Son, with reverence, with awe, with humility.

This it is to think of God. This is the root idea of glorifying God. But this is not enough ; it is only the beginning.

2. To glorify God is to take the convictions which come from right-thinking and to turn them into aspirations. This is the next step toward honoring the Maker. We must not suffer thought to become bedridden in the soul. Few things are more injurious to the mind than that passive contemplation, which fails to run out into active desires or stimulated hope. The habit of thinking, divorced from emotion, turning over ideas or principles in the mind, but with no connection with the will or affections, is as poisonous to the soul as to make blood by healthy feeding, and then to let it go to stagnation in the veins by laziness. It will do no good for us to think about God, if such thought is not used as a means to an end, but it will do us harm. It will make us insensible. It will make us irreverent. The insensibility will be the direct

result of handling an awful and majestic idea without a spiritual purpose. The irreverence will come from taking liberties with the divine Name, perchance, for mere speculation. When men approach God's Holy Name, if even it be for thought and contemplation, they should remember the command to Moses, "Take off thy shoes, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Thought concerning God, then, is legitimate when it tends to the elevation of the soul to a higher plane of being. To think, merely to think, would be somewhat as for a river to flow from its source, and then to flow back again to its original spring. It may be assumed as a principle of our being, that all our acts, internal or external, are only then healthy and genuine, when they reach forward to something beyond and nobler than themselves. We see this in nature. The illumination of the sun is not self-exhausted. It comes down to earth with vivifying fructification, diffusing life, and health, and joyous animation in all things and in all creatures. And that is its beneficence and its glory. The Mississippi starts up far away in the highlands of Minnesota as its fountain head; but when its golden waters start therefrom, they start on their course never to return again. And then the noble river, set free from fetters and restraints, runs on singing at every "winding bout,"

For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

And away she goes, glad and free, broadening and deepening, carrying riches and opulence and glory to states and empires, three thousand miles on her course; the noble mother of towns and villages and cities and magnificent acreages of wheat and corn and sugarcane; her beauteous bosom kissed by the keels of multitudinous crafts; hastening with gifts and blessings to distant lands and foreign populations. And so she flows, glorious in herself, but more glorious in the affluence she bounteously bestows beyond herself.

The analogy is most exact with regard to the soul. Thinking about God is not the end of God-thinking. Thinking of God is the most glorious of all means to a nobler end, that is, the glory of God. When it is mere thinking—albeit God is the object of thought—it is, nevertheless, mere speculation on God. And mere speculation, as such, concerning God has no more value than speculation concerning a mountain or a mine. No, my brethren, right thinking is a thing which rises up to God, and strives to apprehend Him in all the noble aspects of His glorious being. Let the thought of God but truly and healthily stir and agitate the mind of man, and then, of necessity, it will kindle hope, and strong desire, and spiritual aspiration.

Thus was it with that eminent character in Old Testament history whose noble songs, chanted perpetually, from age to age, in the house of God, have been ever

fitted to every phase of spiritual character, have always served to start the finest springs and move the noblest currents of sanctified souls ; and have also given ecstasy to millions of saints on the eve of their departure to Paradise. Never, perhaps, in the history of God's church was there a man who thought so much, so deeply, so continually of God as David did. It was the occupation of his life. It began in his boyhood ; and the boys and girls here this morning should begin their early life, as David did, in thinking much of God. If you think of God while you are young, that habit of thought will become the seed of your life, and will bring a godly fruitage to early manhood and womanhood, and to old age. Hear the words of David: "Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for ; thou art my hope, even from my youth." "Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up until now ; therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works." This thinking of God, then, began in David's youth. And see, "the child was father of the man." Thinking of God became a rooted habit of his soul through life. For, if you will run through the book of Psalms, you will find it full of such expressions as these : "I remember thine everlasting judgments." "I will never forget thy commandments." "Thy testimonies have I claimed as mine heritage forever." "My soul hath kept thy testimonies, and loved them exceedingly."

What was the result of this habit? What fruit sprung from this constant meditation concerning God? One single paragraph from the writings of David will show you. It produced that very spirit of godly aspiration which I am endeavoring to press upon your attention. "Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God."

And here I return directly to the point from which I have slightly departed. Take the convictions which come from right thinking, and turn them, as David did, into heavenly aspirations. Meditate constantly on the character of God. Bring His loving and majestic attributes vividly before you. By an effort of will you can do almost anything, and then the thing repeated becomes a habit of the soul. You see, for instance, that God is good. Take, then, the fact, that is, the goodness of God out of the domain of thought, and make it an aspiration of your soul. Strive after goodness—God's GOODNESS, as a personal possession, and run along the lines of excellence and moral beauty for the fashioning of your inner and your outer life. Take the PURITY OF GOD as an object of admiration. Bring it down from the sphere of speculation, and then send it up to the throne of God—a living flame of desire for your own personal purity in body, mind, and spirit. Think of the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD! Hear the

demand for it in the breezes of Paradise! Hear it in the stern accents of Mount Sinai, in the thunders of the Law! Hear it in the expiatory complaints of sacrificed animals; see it in their flowing blood! Hear it in the moans of Gethsemane! Hear it in the agonies of the Cross! What topic, I ask, has ever been so canvassed and debated as the righteousness of God? "How He could be just, and yet the justifier of them which believe in Jesus." But you, my brethren, step aside from every controversial aspect of this question, and let your souls go out hungering and thirsting for the apprehension of the Lord Jesus Christ, repudiating any and all righteousness of your own as filthy rags, and taking Him with ardor and satisfaction as your "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Take the LOVE OF GOD. You can if you choose look at it as a distant object of thought and contemplation. But I exhort you to covet the spirit of love as your own personal possession. Send up to the heavens the strong cries of your soul for the entrance of the divine love into your heart of hearts, starting all the springs of love within you to flow back again with reverence and humility to the foot of the cross.

Indeed, my friends, there is not a phase of the divine existence, not an attribute of God, not a decree, not a commandment, however abstract it may be, but that, with the aid of the Spirit, may be fused with heat and

fire from above, and become changed in our pure souls into burning desires and heavenly aspirations.

3. One more point, and I will close: To glorify God is to realize the aspirations of the soul into the activities of life. This is practical religion; it answers the requirements of our blessed Lord that we do His commandments. And there can be no true religion without this habit of outward obedience. Mere conviction of the brain, or mere spiritual aspiration, separate from conduct, are each, or both together, insufficient. We must do God's holy will. Just this test is laid down by our blessed Saviour: "If ye love me keep my commandments." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." And St. John, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, speaks with wonderful luminousness: "For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous."

Now let us pause just here for a moment, and strive to get at the full significance of these words of our Lord and the beloved Apostle. There are no great difficulties in arriving at this significance. For, if I mistake not, we are taught by them the duty of reaching forth in our religious life to reality. Not mere feeling, not mere knowledge, not mere sentiment, not

mere conviction, not mere emotion, not mere desire and aspiration, make good and establish actual and substantial Christian character. To talk of how we feel, or what we think concerning Christ, is an idle tale.

No, my brethren, what our Lord desires is something which has passed out and beyond mere human conceit into actual living reality. Did you ever think of that word *reality*? of its full meaning, of its mighty import, of its wide scope and bearing? Reality! that is religion made personal in the Christian life, act, word, conduct, and bearing of living disciples. Righteousness exemplified in living flesh and blood; no mere abstraction of the brain, no glittering ideality, but a thing that may be seen and felt amid human associations, in loving families, in the business activities of common life. It is the faith of Abraham; it is the civic energy and the magisterial force of Moses; it is the purity of Joseph; it is the heroic valor of Joshua; it is the chastity of Ruth; it is the constancy of David; it is the zeal of Elijah; it is the incomparable statesmanship of Daniel and his crystal saintliness; it is the rigidity of the Baptist, the loveliness of St. John, the fiery flames of holy Paul, the large benevolences of St. Barnabas; it is the impetuous enthusiasm of St. Peter, and the martyr energy of Stephen. Nor need we confine our search for these realized aspirations of the soul to sacred writ. They come streaming down the track of the Christian ages

in bright and glowing colors, seen in the lives, the business, the trading, the adventurous navigations, the mercantile zeal, and the large philanthropies of holy men and women; who not only prayed, and wished, and aspired after godliness, but lived it in the daily walk of life.

Let me briefly gather the threads of thought, this morning, and draw to a conclusion. I have endeavored to show that in order to glorify God we must begin with right thinking concerning the Almighty; and then, from the convictions which result from such thinking, rise to the fit aspirations which it is adapted to give us; and then at last to turn our spiritual aspirations into living obedience and active reality.

I beg to commend the Apostle's injunction to your earnest consideration. The master end of existence, whether in angel or in man, is the glory of God. Anything below this end is a ruinous and insulting prostitution of powers. You have gifts, you have powers, you have talents and endowments, but all their activities are but partial and abnormal so long as, in their uses, we are alien from the grand objects of divine regard. We can only secure the rectitude of our being by union with God. And to be in union with God, to be "partakers of the divine nature," is to participate in that everlasting outshining of beauty and excellence which is the affluence of saints and holy angels, and the everlasting glory of the Godhead.

SERMON VII.

UNBELIEVING NAZARETH.

Quinquagesima Sunday.

MARK VI: 5, 6.

And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And He marvelled because of their unbelief.

The inability here spoken of was not absolute, but only relative and conditional in its nature. For we cannot suppose for an instant, with our conviction of the Lord's essential Deity, that His infinite power was a chance, a fitful, an occasional quality. This inability is here spoken of in the manner of common human speech; in order to impress upon us the awful and effectual bar this people of Nazareth had put between themselves and their divine visitor, by blind and obstinate unbelief. The case is one of the saddest! Here were healing and restoration; here were blessedness and illumination, right at their door, close as possible to their persons, very nigh to their souls. But, by the acts of a perverse and godless will, they shut it all out from their souls and robbed themselves of priceless blessings, never again to be offered to them.

Observe, it was their own act ;—not the will, not the impotence of the Lord Jesus. They themselves checked the overflow of gifts and graces upon their own souls. They it was, who shut the gates of mercy on their own spirits. All the powers needed for the restoration of sinners were present in the person of the Lord. Alas ! there was no faculty of spiritual receptivity in this people ; but rather that malignant perversity which makes men, at times, turn their backs upon the very gates of Heaven.

We know full well, that the celestial voice which stilled the raging of tempests, which had overcome the virulence of fiery fevers, which corrected the insanity of maddened brains, which had beaten down the malignant force of devils,—that voice, we know, if it had so pleased Him, could have wrought any mighty works. He might have chosen to do. The people of Nazareth would not have it so ! They jeered at our Lord, although they knew Him well. They asked contemptuous questions concerning Him. They affected scorn of His humble origin, and His lowly occupation. In the sight of faculties most transcendent, of powers most manifestly divine, they were offended at Him. It is then no derogation of our Lord's omnipotence, the record that "He could do no mighty works there." The secret of this reluctance of His supernatural forces to show themselves, lies somewhere else. The mystery of this reser-

vation of His sacred powers requires some other solution. We will search for other causes, if perchance we may ascertain the nature of this alleged inability spoken of in the text.

One of the prominent facts which stands out distinctly in all nature, is this, viz.: that the Almighty has established certain definite modes of operation, to which He Himself is pleased to conform, and conformity to which He imposes upon all creatures and all creation. In this conformity resides all the harmony of the universe, all the blessedness of rational creatures. We look abroad in nature and observe regularity, order, exactness, in all the spheres. We see the daily rising and setting of the sun. We see the punctual return of the seasons. We see rotation "in seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night."

We look abroad in the ranks of human beings, and we see in nations, societies, and families, certain universal results, in enterprise and business activities, all related, and without disorder, to certain most definite modes of operation. Where these modes of operation are fallen upon in any quarter of the globe, men succeed; where they are rejected, men fail; whether it be in health, or trade, or mercantile adventure.

We look still higher, and we see by revelation a nobler sphere of beings, revelling in perfect bliss; and we observe the same conformity to definite laws, which prove the spring of their bliss and glory.

Now the secret of these facts seems to be, that the Almighty has laid down for the rule of life, certain laws which He makes the conditions of success and happiness. Compliance with these, in the realm of nature, produces the harmony of the spheres; and among men yields the health, well-being, the prosperity and the joyousness of God's creatures.

It is precisely the same in the spiritual world, as in the physical; *i. e.*, that results are conditioned on certain definite principles, which the Almighty has established in His spiritual kingdom. All the operations of this kingdom are regulated by specific laws, and thus made to proceed in distinct processes, which are pleasing to the divine mind. Possibly God could have ordered the arrangement of the spiritual universe otherwise than he has: I say *possibly*, from the fact that I do not know anything about it. But one thing may be taken for granted, *viz.*: that God's present system is the wisest and best. At any rate, God chooses thus to carry on His system. If we seek any higher reason than this, namely, than His wisdom and judgment for the peculiarities of His system, we are lost in confusion. If we ask why it is that He regulates His system in *this*, and not in *that* way, all we can say is, "even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." Any thing beyond this lands us in darkness and confusion. "For the things which are revealed belong to us

and our children," but "the secret things belong to our God."

These observations shed some light upon the singular statement of the text. We are told in it that our Lord "could do no mighty work" at Nazareth. Why was this? It was not that His omnipotent arm was withered there. Not that the Almightyness of the Son of God vanished all of a sudden. By no manner of means. All the full, miraculous power of Jesus was still garnered up in His divine person. All the majesty of the God-head still centred in His mysterious and awful Being.

But, you will observe, that during our Lord's sojourn upon earth, although His miracles must have been almost myriad-like in number, yet they were not scattered abroad in wild and indiscriminate confusion. There is, most certainly, a regulating principle which underlies all the acts of His most holy life. In the communication of all His gifts of mercy, one falls quite easily upon a principle of law. The life of Jesus was, in one sense, an economy of mercy. We may regard it in another, as a dispensation of miraculous gifts.

See for yourselves the evidence of system and regulation in the working of His miracles. First of all notice that, in cases of infirmity, it was the Lord's wont to require faith in him who was to be helped. The challenge almost everywhere was, "Believest thou?" "If thou hast faith." Or if the question was not asked,

then the penetrative eye of the Master, having made the discovery, He was satisfied; the miracle was wrought, and the sufferer relieved. Mercy evidently was nowhere forced upon unwilling souls. Manifestly there must be, in this new kingdom, the agreement and a blending of both the human and the divine wills. It was agreeable to the designs of the Redeemer that those who rejected belief should have no mighty saving works done among them. On the other hand, whenever our Lord discovered the deep conviction in sufferers that the Messiah would relieve them, then the channels of loving pity were at once loosened; then the gates of Jesus' mercy were immediately opened; then life, power, and healing flowed from their exhaustless fountains; and virtue went forth from the wondrous person of the Lord to the blind, the deaf, the leper, or the demoniac.

In to-day's Gospel we have presented to us a most striking instance of the fact and theory.* You have seen a poor blind man sitting by the way-side, in Jericho, begging. They tell him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. Instantly the startled air is filled with his ringing, pleading cry, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!" The people, vexed at the disturbance, rebuke the poor fellow. But the deep conviction that the Deliverer is at hand possesses him, and

* The blind man at Jericho, Luke xviii. 38-40: the Gospel for the day.

once and again he lifts up the piercing, importunate Litany, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." That cry wafts his own conviction to the mind of Jesus. The Lord draws nigh to him and asks, "What wilt thou have me to do unto thee?" and he says, "That I may receive my sight." He knows that Jesus is the sight-giver; that the Lord opens the eyes both of body and soul. And as his faith, so his reward. Jesus says unto him, "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee."

Contrast this transaction with the facts at Nazareth. It was the home of our Lord's youth and boyhood. Its people knew well His miraculous birth, His wondrous childhood, and were well acquainted with His extraordinary life. And yet mark the haughty coldness with which they received Him. "From whence," is the cynical question, "hath this man these things?" See, too, the contemptuous sneer at his humble origin; "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Do you wonder that the mighty flow of love is chilled in His sacred bosom? Are you surprised when you read that "He could do there no mighty work?"

Notice here, first of all, that it is a principle of the kingdom of heaven, a principle laid down by our Lord Himself, that there is to be no useless, idle waste of divine privileges upon the vulgar and profane. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." Nazareth presented an

occasion in which our Lord could illustrate this principle which He Himself, but a short time before, had taught His disciples ; and He acted on it in that spirit of reserve which husbands gifts and treasures for faith and virtue, but which will not waste them upon rude scepticism and vulgar unbelief. And, next, observe that our Lord notices the absence of the conditions which regulate the dispensation of His mercies and His gifts. Here that prime provision was utterly wanting. There was no faith among this people. Not a single rootlet of belief was discoverable among them. The soil of their nature had been thickly sown with the seeds of unfaith and falsehood ; so thickly sown that the whole surface of their nature was choked with the tares of moral resistance ; the whole soil of their being was filled with the strongest aptitudes for things monstrous, defiance of God, and spiritual perverseness.

And note here, my brethren, that unfaith, unfaith like that at Nazareth, blind, unreasoning, persistent unfaith, is alienation from God ; is infidelity to divine truth ; and, in its ultimate tendency, is atheism. The legitimate results of unbelief in the supernatural is not only to cause us to deny the things supernatural, but also to surcharge our whole moral nature with hatred to all things pure, true, just, and lovely. And such a state as this is sure to bring upon us the divine disapprobation ; hedging up our way in life, and blinding us with confusion through all eternity.

And here we may learn a few lessons which bear most powerfully, as well upon our personal as our Church life ; for we can make no greater mistake than to suppose that the transaction in the text has no bearings upon our relations in life, has no teachings which pertain to our characters ; we learn, I say, that all our works are vain and empty unless they spring from, and are governed by faith in God.

Doubtless every faithful disciple of the Lord here is living with some certain definite purposes of life before him ; is aiming after certain things of magnitude for himself, for the Church, for God's glory.

(a) Look for a moment at your *personal* aspirations. We are all of us conscious of them. They are proper and legitimate seekings of the nature the divine Father has given us. They are, however, most vivid in the breasts of the young. Sometimes they are almost a consuming flame : desires and ambitions for a beautiful home in the future, for distinction, for place and position, for riches with their delights and comforts, for professional renown, for general applause.

Such, my younger brethren, are the bright lights seen in distant vistas, which beckon you on in the course of life, and stir your zeal.

But I beg to remind you that it is not by mere self-assertion, not by the sheer force of your own talents, that you can do any thing in life. No matter what may

be the scope of your capacity, if you will rely upon your own right arm for success, and not upon God, you are sure to fail. You need a strength for the work of life, which springs from a higher source than the fountains of your own being. Man, even in his best estate, is but weakness and littleness. How true are the words of the poet :—

Unless above himself, he can erect himself,
How poor a thing is man !

No matter what may be your calling, nor how brilliant its prospects, if the divine element is lacking therein, then frustration and defeat is a certainty. The only way to bring the aims of life into their true relation to God, is by faith. By inward trust, and by reliance upon Him who is invisible, we secure the adjustments of our whole inner being to the eternal throne, and so chime in at once with the harmonies of the universe.

Then the Lord Jesus will do mighty things in you, because faith has become the master principle of your being. Abide in Him. It is sweet to abide in Him. It is profitable to abide in Him. To use His own words—"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." For then all your powers, all your parts and aptitudes, will be sanctified by His own personal influence operating on you ; your life and labors shall tend to the highest and noblest ends ; for Jesus of Nazareth will do mighty works in you through faith,

and fill you with the largest capacities for good to others, all your life.

(b) Passing from the sphere of personal desires, look at some of the larger aims which influence our life. Here, just now, we are all aiming at the erection of a temple for the worship of Almighty God.* How are we to achieve success? You may bring to this work, zeal, self-sacrifice, large gifts, great activity. But these of themselves, cannot yield that success. They are but the human element in this work. We need the Son of man working with us, for without Him we can do nothing. The lavish outpouring of gold, separate from His wondrous powers, would be but as "the chaff which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth." But with His presence and blessing upon our labors, all weakness, poverty, and emptiness, as they may seem to outward sight, shall prove the greatest opulence and the vastest wealth. Only let us carry with us the simple trust that this is God's work; that He only can work it out to fullest completion; and then, according to our faith shall be our reward. Jesus of Nazareth will do mighty things for us; the silver and the gold shall flow into our treasury; and all the outward fashioning of our desired temple shall grow up before us, into beautiful proportions. Only believe. Have faith as a grain of mustard seed, and you shall remove mountains.

* This sermon was preached in St. Mary's chapel, Washington, D. C.

(c) And yet there is a higher end than these other objects, which should stimulate our souls. Our grandest ambition, as disciples of Christ, should doubtless be for the upbuilding and compacting of that spiritual temple, which the Holy Ghost, ever since the day of Pentecost, has been fashioning out of saved and sanctified souls, to the glory of Christ.

The recurrence of the season of Lent makes easy the application of the theme and thought. We are called upon at this time to think especially of our sins, to think more absorbingly of the things of Christ, and to stimulate other souls to do the same. How desirable is it, then, that holy men and women in our flock should seek the deepening of their own personal piety, by thorough self-abasement, and the reaching forth for larger gifts of grace; that the younger members of this church should renew their vows, make a more thorough self-consecration of themselves to Christ, walk more soberly, and live more faithfully; that now that "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," the careless, the carnal, and the godless who come within these walls, may be led to think of their souls; may come and "sit by the wayside;" may be led to cry out with a sense of deepest need—"Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us." What favors, what gifts could be granted to us, comparable with such a result; if indeed the Holy Ghost should move among us, convicting men "of sin, of righteousness, and of a

judgment to come;" "taking the things of Jesus and showing them," to their souls, to their conversion and enlightenment.

But surely there can be no need to tell the simplest child here, that such grand spiritual results are not the fruit of mere human care and effort. No mere human energy, no mere voice of human persuasion, can wrench these men away from deadly sins, can turn careless women from sinful love of display. No mechanical processes, no mere religious feeling, however regular or solemn can induce the unholy mind among us to break loose from the fetters of guilt, and to give itself up to deep repentance; and then a solemn dedication of the whole being to Christ in Holy Confirmation.

No! *we* cannot do this work. Jesus of Nazareth must needs visit us this Lent, and the mighty works which He could not do in His own country through unbelief, must needs be done here, by faith, if God's work is revived among us, if more souls are to be converted, if we are to rejoice in the great salvation.

But, brethren, you know the conditions for the dispensation of God's gifts and graces. "He can do no mighty works among us," if unfaith pervades the minds of this people; if this church is carnal and unspiritual in its tone; if this people cannot discern the invisible and the eternal. But, if on the other hand, you walk by faith and not by sight; if your constant gaze is set upon

the things which are not seen, but which are real and eternal; if holy men and women walk with Jesus, if they constantly commune with Him, if they are wont to open their mouth wide, and to expect great things of Him; then you may be assured that Jesus of Nazareth when He passeth by this Lent, will not close His gracious hand, nor shut up His merciful heart. There will be no marvelling at your unbelief, no withholding His wonderful gifts; but great and wondrous things, yea "mighty works" shall be done among you; in your hearts and in your households; in your children, in your brothers and in your sisters; in Christless parents; and He will come among you, and He will lay His hands, *not* "upon a few sick folk," as He did in unbelieving Nazareth, but upon *many* of you, and He will heal you.

And, therefore, I say in conclusion, cling to the Cross of our dear Lord with a most unyielding faith. *He* is the only one to hold on to, if you seek blessedness and life. Be not discouraged at your small faith, at your great weaknesses! Hold on to Jesus. All other things around us fail; but He is the Rock! Change and decay meet us in all visible things. Nothing that meets the sense abides. What is there below the skies which can suffice the soul? What that can answer all the heart's vast and craving needs? Everything in nature and in man is fading!

—From their spheres
 The stars of human glory are cast down;
 Perish the roses and the flowers of kings!

--The vast frame
 Of social nature changes evermore
 Her organs and her members, with decay
 Restless —

All earthly things decline. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves," staggered at the inevitable dissolution that awaits all temporal, all mortal events! Whither, then, shall we turn? Upon what shall we fasten ourselves, unless to Him, the eternal Word?—Him "Who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," and Who speaks to us from the eternal heavens, "Fear not: I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore. Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Blessed Lord, we believe Thy word, and we trust in Thee. "Help Thou our unbelief!" It is no vain repetition of our lips when we stand up with the saints and confess the Faith. We do verily believe all the articles of the Christian faith. "We believe," in very deed, "that for us men and for our salvation, Thou didst come down from heaven, and wast incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; and wast made man, and wast crucified for us." "Thou art the king of glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting son of the Father." We beseech Thee, this morning, to remember Thine

own promises to those who believe. Let it be unto us according to our faith. Increase our faith, O Lord; and come among us, and do mighty works here, in our hearts, in our families, for our Church; and all the glory shall be Thine, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—three persons, one God, now and evermore. Amen!

SERMON VIII.

THE REJECTION OF CHRIST.*

ST. MATTHEW VIII. 29.

And behold they cried out, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?

The devils who held two miserable men under their thralldom put this question to our blessed Lord. They were coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, and met the Redeemer as He was entering into the country of the Gergesenes. You know the fate they met with. They besought Him that they might enter the herd of swine that was feeding nigh: and their request was granted. They came out of the unfortunate and afflicted men, and entered into the swine. And the whole herd now, overcome by the evil spirits, ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

To vindicate the teaching of Holy Scripture, and strive to prove that there are evil spirits in the world, that they oftentimes get the upperhand of men, subjecting them to sore and intolerable evils, is not my present purpose. Be well assured that there are such beings as

*Preached in the chapel of Howard University, Washington, D. C.

the devil and his angels, just as we know that there are bad men in the world, utterly estranged from everything good, and devoting themselves to everything monstrous and cruel. So, too, there is an unseen and malicious spirit of mighty power, whose aim is the ruin of souls. It is an awful fact, although frequently forgotten, that we are liable to the deadliest hurt if this truth is not kept constantly in mind, and at all times in our memory.

This, however, is not the topic to be chiefly considered now. Your attention is specially called to these scornful and contemptuous words, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou son of God?"

They are the words of the devils, but, unhappily, not confined to them. Alas, they have been taken up, over and over again, by sinful men, all through the world's history. They are the utterance of our fellow creatures daily, in every walk of life, in their rejection of the Blessed Master.

These words, then, are important, chiefly, inasmuch as they are the key-note of the world's utterance for nearly two thousand years, concerning the Office and the Privileges of our blessed Lord. The devils in the narrative knew well of Whom they were speaking. It was no ambiguous question concerning an unknown or supposititious person. Neither was it an expression of doubt as to the power of Him of whom they questioned,

"What have we to do with Thee?" They were conscious in Whose presence they stood. They were well aware of the august and divine personage before whom they stood. They knew that it was "Emmanuel, God with us," to whom they were speaking; for they call Him, in the plainest, clearest words, "Jesus, thou Son of God." And they knew perfectly all the force and the whole intent and meaning of what they were saying.

And yet, with an audacity at once fearful and malignant, they ask, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God?" The idiom is indeed different from that which is common with us in the English tongue; but its significance is evident. The question means, without doubt, "What is there common between you and us? We do not want your interference. Why not let us alone? There is no sympathy between us. Why, then, do you trouble us?" Just such is the cry of a sinful world whenever the Church, in Christ's name, would call it from its sins. The scoffer, the infidel, the sceptic, the worldling, the sensualist, the moralist, all alike reject interference with their aims, and demand, "Jesus, thou Son of God, what have we to do with Thee?"

The disposition, in all ages, to scout and reject the Lord Jesus is one of the marvels of history. Thousands of men, in all the eras, have confessed His name and taken up His cross; but tens, nay, hundreds of

thousands have refused obedience to His commands and submission to His yoke. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." His way had been prepared before Him. Prophets had foretold His coming and His mission; and so thoroughly had the Jewish mind been trained to an expectancy of the Messiah, that the whole Jewish nation was anxiously waiting, in hope and desire. Nay, more than this: they had so spread abroad their own expectation and assurance that, all through the Roman Empire and in far-off Eastern lands, even pagan nations were looking, at the time of His advent, for some grand, majestic being from the skies to visit earth, to heal its moral diseases, and to give it restored life and blessedness.

And yet, when He came among them, with every token of divinity in His life and character, they turned their backs upon and rejected Him. It was not a partial and incidental repulse of the Saviour. It was broad, sweeping, and absolute. It covered His whole life. Beginning at Bethlehem, it only ended at Calvary. In the face of His unequalled life, His wondrous teaching, and His marvellous acts, wrought by scores and hundreds, this people thought scorn and contempt of Him. Nothing could convince them. They had set their hearts against Him. They were thoroughly determined that, so far as the spiritual element of their being was concerned, they would have nothing to do with Him.

Do we say nothing could convince them? Convince them of what? That He was a living being? Why, was He not plainly and openly in their sight, going about, speaking, eating, and drinking before them? Or, perchance, that He gave sight to the blind, healed the lepers, raised the dead? They saw these mighty deeds with their own eyes, acknowledged the actual performance of them, and then attributed them to the power of Beelzebub! What, then, was the point wherein they could not be convinced? There was no such point! It was the old suggestion and purpose of Satan that Christ should have no control, no authority over their souls. It was the audacious question of the devils—"What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God?"

This conduct of the Jews was repeated by their kinsfolk and relatives, after the Resurrection of our Lord. The Apostles went forth, according to their Master's command, proclaiming the glad tidings to the Jews throughout the Holy land, and in the distant quarters, in Asia, Greece, and the Roman Empire. They carried with them every possible evidence of His mission and of His rising again. In very many cases the news concerning the Messiah had preceded them, and the people had heard of the wonderful life, the miracles wrought by Him, and of His most strange death. Nay, more than this. The Apostles, in attestation of their mis-

sion, wrought signs and wonders among the sick and diseased. Vain and fruitless were all their words and miracles. The Apostle St. Paul himself tells us how the Jews treated him and his companions. "For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us."

What led the Jews to this spite and bitterness against the Gospel? Did they think the Apostles were endeavoring to deceive them? Nay, how could that be? Many of them, that is, in Judea, had seen Christ. Many of them had witnessed His miracles. Many of them had heard of His marvellous acts and His serene and glorious life. And besides, they saw every where that the Apostles went, proofs of their divine mission in the saving, the restoring miracles which they wrought, in the name and by the power of the same Lord whose Gospel they were preaching. Could the Jews deny the evidence of their own eyes? Could they gainsay and reject the palpable facts which appealed to their senses?

What, then, was the difficulty with these men? Alas, it was just the same which had proved a stumbling block to their fathers. It was the set will; it was the stubborn determination not to yield to this spiritual Master. No further proof was needed, in their case;

no additional evidence. They had clear, certain, undeniable facts immediately before their eyes. It was the Satanic self-assertion of these people that they would have no ruler over them in the realm of spirituality. So far as moral truth and spiritual ideas were concerned they were a law to themselves, and this Jesus of Nazareth should not be their king! It was the malignant audacity of the devils: "Incarnate God as you are, we will not submit to you!" "What hast thou to do with us, Jesus, thou Son of God?"

We have a further illustration of this same spirit among the philosophers in the first ages of the Christian dispensation. St. Paul gives us the earliest indication of their temper, in his visit to Athens. This was the seat of Grecian letters, wisdom, and philosophy. Before they heard him, certain philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics encountered him and called him "Babbler." And after he preached that celebrated sermon on Mars Hill some of them mocked at the doctrine of the Resurrection. This was the general disposition of the learned in primitive times, for nigh three centuries. The philosophic mind in Greece, in Rome, in Alexandria, was strongly antagonistic to the simplicity of the Gospel; and especially rejected the idea that men should seek salvation through the blood and atonement of another. Bitter as was the persecution carried on by the Emperors of Rome against the

Christians, their opposition was not nearly so fierce as was that of the wise men and philosophers of the Empire. The one now and then put Christians to death; the others sneered at, ridiculed, and scouted the Christian faith. They brought the full artillery of their wit, their genius, their learning, and their wisdom, to bear against it. They unceasingly, for over two hundred years, wrote and published keen and clever works against the Gospels and the new religion. They strove in every way to set the mind, the thought, the genius of the world against the Church, and to identify the religion of Jesus with slaves and vulgar people. Indeed, they called it a "pestilent and flagitious superstition."

What was the difficulty with the philosophers of primitive times? Did Christianity come to them without testimony? Did our holy religion demand their assent, unsupported by evidence? Entirely the reverse. The earlier preachers of the Gospel came to these men with the explicit words of the older scriptures, with an historic church, with abundant testimony of heathen writers, with documentary proofs concerning Jesus drawn from the reports of Pontius Pilate and other Roman Governors, from their own national archives; and they had the fullest light!

No. It was not the lack of evidence, not the want of testimony, not the difficulty in believing such strange tidings, even, which troubled these men. They could

believe in oracles. They could put faith in auguries. They could trust in a multitude of gods. They could foster and uphold, even if they did not believe in, the superstitious rites of their pagan systems. But when the religion of Jesus Christ came to them, with every possible demonstration of truth and reality, demanding their fealty and subjection, they, in the same spirit, and with the like bitterness of the Jews, refused to receive it!

What was the difficulty with these men? Was it an intellectual incapacity? Was it a strain on reason or judgment? No. It was simply and solely a moral one. It was an obliquity in the region of the soul. It was the offence of the Cross. It was the rebellious spirit which rejected a master of the heart and the will. It was the uprising of their whole inner nature to spurn the yoke of Jesus. It was the same audacious self-assertiveness of man's sinful nature which brooks no moral and spiritual control. "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?"

And just so it is in our own day and time. What is the matter with the great thinkers of our age? Why do they attempt to write down Christianity? Why do they use such vigorous effort to disprove the truth of Holy Scripture? Why do so many of them, while in one sense holding on to Christianity, endeavor, on the other hand, to extract from the revelation of God its

very core and essence, the supernatural Presence and Power of Jesus? The light comes, in a full blaze, upon these men. They know the history of our race. They know all the annals of human religion. They see the miraculous influence upon the nations of the Name and the truths of Jesus Christ. They see the wondrous things the Gospel has done in many quarters of the heathen world, even in a single generation. They see the lowest pagans redeemed from the grossest superstitions, and turned from cannibalism. They see heathen youth changed in a brief period to preachers of the Gospel; and even a bishop in the Church, himself a convert from paganism, with the very marks of his rude tribe upon his face, heralding the Gospel into the very heart of Africa.

How is it, then, that these superior intellects spurn the Cross, and reject the Lord who died for them? They will not submit to any control in the domain of the spirit! They claim an unfettered authority over every department of their being! They demand of the Lord Jesus, as they would of any mere man on earth, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?"

One caution must be given which it may be needful to state. Do not think that this proud self-confidence is confined to thinkers and philosophers alone. It is the spirit of man! Just as common among the rude,

illiterate, unthinking, as among their superiors in all these respects. You will find scores of youth in your streets, who, if you speak to them of Christ, will foam with rage, and curse the Lord who died for them! Many a pitiably drunken sot vexes the soul of a pious wife who loves and prays for him. And at this moment our saloons, our restaurants, and our grog shops are crowded with men who have no more doubt of the truth of Christianity than you or I have; who yet, if you should approach them and plead with them to lay hold of the great salvation, would turn upon you with an oath and tell you that "they did not want anything to do with your accursed religion!"

Again, then, let us ask, "Why is it that the mind of man accords so thoroughly with the malignant scorn of Satan?" First of all observe that it never was, neither then of old, nor now in our own day, because of the personal evil men saw in the character of Jesus. Of all the various indictments which have been drawn up against Christianity by the infidel world, there never was one which assailed the purity of our Lord's life or the supreme excellence of His character. On the contrary, His goodness and excellence have been universally acknowledged. The Jews, in His lifetime, railed at and persecuted Him. But why? Because of any taint or vileness they discovered in Him? Just the reverse. Their accusations give the highest testimony to the per-

fect purity of His character, amount to the noblest eulogy on His life. They censured Him for Sabbath-breaking, because He had healed a man on that holy day. But what is this but evidence of a sacred beneficence, which bursts through cold rule and icy limitations, to bless and to save? They charged Him with receiving sinners, and eating with them; surely this testifies to His gracious condescension, His humility, and His brotherly humanity. They accused Him of casting out devils; and this is proof of His conflict with the powers of evil, and the pure spirituality of His labors and His cures.

Nay, go through the entire catalogue of accusations which they brought against Him, and every one stands out, clearly defined, as an actual evidence of His innocence and spiritual goodness. This was the very impression these charges made upon a disinterested, certainly non-partial, but gross and brutal heathen. The Jews heaped up their charges into one big, monstrous, and, as they thought, irresistible arraignment, at the court of Pontius Pilate. And after listening, with even prejudiced attention, to it, he turns to them and declares, "I have examined Him before you and have found no fault in this man. No, nor yet Herod; for I sent you unto him." Exasperated at their failure to injure our Lord's character, they became infuriated and violent. Then Pilate turns again to them, perplexed and puzzled at their pertinacity and rage, and asks,—

“Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him.”

And this innocency and blamelessness have been acknowledged ever since, even by infidels and the ungodly. At this day all classes of unbelievers acknowledge the lofty perfection of the Man Christ Jesus.

Take up the various works which have been written concerning Him which deny His deity, and you can not find *one* which assails His moral worth and preciousness. Bad as is the unregenerate heart, bitter and hateful as is the unbelieving spirit, yet who ever heard of any anti-Christian writer accusing our Lord—it seems almost profanity to utter the words—of untruth, of an immoral act, of depravity, of malignity, of cruelty?

On the contrary, the great misbelievers, while denying the deity of our Lord, are not unfrequently foremost in extolling His moral excellency. While rejecting with scorn the idea that He was anything more than a mere man, many of them speak with rapture of His purity and moral loftiness. (1) Take the *Jews* first. While almost everywhere they deny our Lord's Messiahship, their ablest, calmest writers speak of Him as a pure, lofty, and most superior man. (2) The *Rationalistic* mind, as the Jewish, would fain strip Him of every vestige of His Godhead; and yet Rousseau once declared “If the death of Socrates be that of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God.” One

of the most voluminous infidel writers of our day is the French *Litterateur*, M. Renan, and he, while criticising the Lord as a moral fanatic and spiritual enthusiast, yet is forced to declare Him as "the ideal of humanity."

The real ground of this aversion of the schools to the Christ of Scripture is not, and never has been, because of any personal evil in His life and character. All acknowledge His goodness and moral excellence. "Whence then," the question arises, "the antagonism everywhere and at all times manifest, against the authority and control which Jesus demands and requires in the Holy Word? Why do men refuse submission to Him? Why do they question His rule and mastership over their hearts and minds?"

The real reason, the true cause of all this opposition, is "the offence of the Cross." Man does not like to be saved by another! Man refuses to accept the spiritual subjection of the Christian system! Man swells with an inordinate and exaggerated independence, which will not brook the deliverance of the Cross! Man rises up with inordinate self-consciousness, and puts aside every suggestion of his deep spiritual need, although it be whispered by the voice of Jesus!

Yet, after all, it is vain to say, vain to think—"What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" The Cross of Christ is the bright star of the universe. Nay, rather the Cross of Christ is the sun in the celestial

heavens. This religion of Jesus is the one great, mighty, marvellous thing of magnitude in all the histories. The Lord Jesus is the grand leading idea of all history! Christianity two thousand years ago began its career; it entered into the workings, policies, and movements of men and nations, and has everywhere changed the channels of their flow, and sent them running anew into purer and more glorious currents. Its special function, its specific mission, was the restoration of maimed and fractured souls; but its efficacy has been felt in every province of life, society, and enterprise. Where but its *shadow* has fallen, there life and glory have been suddenly and lastingly evoked, to the praise of God's grace. The distinctive, the characteristic work of Jesus, was in the soul; but see how the power and efficacy of our Lord's spirit have re-created all the art, the civilization, the laws and philosophy of mankind. These, too, at its start, denied the authority of the Cross. These, too, refused subjection to His control and moral sway. These, too, with scornful utterance, put the question of the devils—"What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?"

See again the marvel of history. Christianity has driven the old brutality of paganism from the laws of Europe, and infused the spirit of the Gospel into all the codes of Christendom. The civilization of Europe, of the United States, and of every superior State in the

world, is based upon the pure and elevating sentiments of the faith of Jesus. The old paganism which defiled the sculpture, paintings, and architecture of the world, has been driven into oblivion, and spiritual beauty has come to invest the highest art, and to adorn the noblest culture. Blot out the last two thousand years of the world's history, rid the annals of the race of the name and the idea of our Incarnate God, and what then would the world be? Where, in this event, would be letters? Where the philanthropy which has saved the serf, and freed the slave? Where the hospitals? What would be the condition of woman? Where would be the missions which have converted Europe, and which are now redeeming Asia and Africa? Where the law and order, which have given security and elevation to Christian States, society, and families?

But aside from these broad, general considerations, there are *personal* aspects of this subject which show the vital, the overpowering relation of Jesus to the soul of man; which give evidence of the fact that separation from the person and the influence of the Redeemer, is spiritual death; proving that we cannot with safety ask the audacious, God-defying question, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?"

Still further, look at our large, deep, overwhelming needs in spiritual matters. We are sinners and need

cleansing from defilement. We are guilty, and need absolution and remission. We have pains, sorrows, afflictions, and we need relief, rest, consolation. We have poverty, and need riches. We have broken hearts, that need binding up. Death comes to us all, and we need life and blessedness. And these miseries are extended world-wide. Sin has scattered them into every quarter of the globe, and among all nations, into all families. Doubtless there is a system, a vast corporation of evil spirits throughout the universe, active and malignant, infusing the poison of distress into myriads of souls around us and below. But, on the other hand, God has established a system and kingdom of spiritual assistances, through all the ranks of men and angels, with Christ at the head. And to whom else but Him can we go for comfort, for satisfaction, for life, for eternal blessedness? He only has the words of eternal life. He only is "the resurrection and the life." He only is the one "that liveth and was dead ; who has the keys of hell and death."

"What have we to do with Thee, Jesus thou Son of God?" Rather, indeed, what have we to do with any but Thee, Lord and Master? What are the concerns, what the interests, whether for time or eternity, in which we can do without Thee?

The presence of Jesus may excite the temper and the fears of evil spirits, and stir the opposition of unbe-

lieving men. But we who are Christians know in Whom we have believed. We know what wonderful things He has done for us. We know our only life is hid in Him. We know already somewhat of the glory which is yet to be revealed in Him, in fulness and perfection, for our souls! Yes, this same Jesus Whom wicked men and evil spirits reject, is our only hope and refuge now and forever! He is our God, our Saviour, our Protector, our Guide, our only consolation, our salvation. Amid the darkness which bedims our feeble sight in this world He is our light. And when the shades of death film and glaze our departing sight, we know in Whom we have believed. To Thee we come, blessed, adorable Saviour; help us, feed us, illuminate us, and with angels and archangels we will glorify Thy Name through eternal ages!

SERMON IX.

The nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

THE MOTIVES TO DISCIPLESHIP.

EPH. IV. 20, 21.

*But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him,
and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus.*

The whole passage reads thus :—"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus."

The church of Ephesus was so distinguished for piety that almost every reference to it, in the New Testament, is eulogistic. If you turn to St. Paul's address to its Elders in Acts xx, or listen to the voice of the Lord Jesus

in the book of Revelation, the absence of rebuke stands out in marked contrast with the admonitions which are given to well nigh every other Christian body in the New Testament. But when we open the epistle of the great Apostle, to this church, we are struck at once with a train of rich and glowing utterances, which at times rises up to the melody and the rhythm of the grandest poetry. Wilberforce (the elder) said of this epistle, that it was "seraphic!" Farrar, in our own day, says it is "emphatically the epistle of the Ascension." And there is a heavenly elevation and a gracious spirit running through it, which are only equalled by the divine songs of the sweet singer of Israel, and the grand disclosures of the Apocalypse.

The ground of excellence in this epistle is character. The Christian life in the church of Ephesus was so pure and lofty that it thrilled the soul of St. Paul, and gave, as it were, a higher inspiration to his pen. This singularity, that is, of conspicuous saintship amid the darkness of Ephesian pagan life, was a thing as bright and brilliant to his sight, as the splendor of the midday sun. See, for instance, in this passage before us, how clearly the apostle distinguishes or notes the differences in the state and condition of Christian men and the worldly. "They," he says, "had the understanding darkened;" "they were alienated from the life of God through ignorance;" "they were past feeling, given over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness."

But observe the contrast, so soon as he comes to speak of disciples:—"But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be ye have heard Him, and have been taught the truth as it is in Jesus." See how the grand characteristics of the Christian life ring out, trumpet-like, in this strong and most lucid passage.

What was the ground of difference between these two classes? What produced the great contrast between the former, pagan life of these Ephesian Christians, and their later regenerated and sanctified being? What, but the motives of existence; the different springs of action set in motion by God the Holy Ghost? This it was, which produced the strong contrast here spoken of by the Apostle. In the school of Christ, they had learned the true purposes of life, the grand ends and aims of being; and I wish to spend the time of instruction this morning in calling your attention to those grand and sacred impulses, which led us to become disciples; and which prompt the life which we are endeavoring to maintain. I ask, therefore:—What is the end and object of Christian life and profession, in a believer's soul?

1st. And first of all we begin with the *personal* reasons, for the confession of Christ. It is not the highest, noblest reason, but it is the first in order. It is impossible to escape this personal individual aspect of the matter. For, on every side, you and I, and every

other Christian man, is challenged for a reason for the singularity of life and bearing which marks every believer, who is not a mere sham of a Christian, or a hypocrite. And so, on the other hand, we too, if we are faithful men to the souls of others, challenge them for a reason why they live out of Christ; under the dominion of sin and Satan. What is the answer which we are to give to this momentous question? Putting aside all reserve, I shall speak for myself. I am a Christian (and I am speaking of the *personal* reasons for my profession) because I have a soul, and am anxious for its salvation. I am aware that to many, who look merely at the surface of things, this will imply selfishness. They will say, that man is so absorbed in his own interests and safety, that he is led to subject himself to the control of the name Christ Jesus, and to enrol himself among His disciples. But this allegation is entirely false and misleading. Its error lies in the non-recognition of the fact that there is a very marked difference between selfishness and self-love. To care for one's own interests, to seek one's own advantage, to strive after one's own well-being, with just regard to the rights of others, is not selfishness. That is an abnormal and a degenerate tendency, which, in its legitimate results, sets aside the being and the rights of both God and man. But the quality of interestedness, if I may so term it, is one of the prime principles of the being of

both angels and men. Self-love is an attribute which belongs to our nature in its state of purity, which was planted in the original constitution of man, and which has no more an intrinsic taint of evil in it, than any other of our natural endowments. On the contrary, religion, to use the words of Butler, "so far from disowning the principle of self-love, often addresses itself to that very principle, and always to the mind in that state when reason presides." And the basis of the appeal is that everything in the universe has a value. God has given it a value. The soul of man, far above all other created things, has a value, only second to the worth and excellence of the Deity Himself. As a spiritual being, then, I am bound to self-interest in the preciousness of the everlasting spirit within me. While not disregarding the spirits of angels or of men, I have a trust in my own soul, which I cannot make secondary to the soul of any other finite being. It is my most valued possession, and anxiousness for its salvation is of right the master personal aim of my existence. This salvation pertains to the two related spheres of my existence. I am, *first* of all, in a world here, where all the forces of moral influence wage, incessantly, a deadly warfare for my ruin. I cannot speak for others; but for myself, I do say, that if I were blind to the existence of evil in me or around me, if I lived oblivious to the deadly and unhallowed desires of my own nature, if I denied the

presence of riotous appetites, which, all my life long have risen up for mastery, if I ignored the impulse and the power of deadly passions, which, if unsubdued, would long ere this have consumed me; and if, back of all this, I disowned the presence and the mastery of a dark and mighty being, the author of all evil, the prince of all damning mischief:—He who sets a-going everywhere the inky floods of human depravity, and fills the heavens of humanity with the palpable palls of guilt and misery:—if, I say, I could live all my lifetime, thus blind, insensate, demented, and infatuated, careless of the responsibilities of time, and indifferent to the issues of eternity, then I should be the grandest fool, or the wildest madman that ever trod the earth. But by the grace of God I will be neither of these. I desire, above all other things, the salvation of this undying spirit within me; and hence I appeal to Christ, who is the “King immortal, eternal,” “to whom all power in heaven and earth is given,” to give me pardon; rescue from myself and my sins; safety and protection from the assaults of the Adversary. I appeal to the Lord Jesus for this great salvation; for He is “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.” “There is none other name,” besides His name, “whereby we can be saved.” I have no other assurance for the plucking up the roots of my moral diseases from my soul, but His grace and power. And therefore, as a reasonable

being, I am glad to stretch forth my hands, and to accept the salvation which He graciously offers me.

Now this is the reason why I am a Christian. Christ Jesus is the only being who can save me, a miserable, wretched and sin-condemned man. I speak, this morning, but for myself. Nay, I take back, at once, these words. I may, and not presumptuously, speak for others here. For every child of God here who has been washed and cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, will tell you the same tale of spiritual disaster which has overtaken my soul; of the same utter, inner helplessness and ruin, in the domain of the spirit; and then of the grand rescue of the blessed Redeemer, by the purchase of His blood, applied personally to his very soul. I speak then for myself; and I add thereto the testimony of saved and redeemed men and women in this church, the reason why we are disciples; that is, we seek salvation from sin in this world, and everlastingly in the outer, eternal world which never ends. This is why, this morning, on bended knees, we sent up the cry—"Lamb of God, grant us thy peace!" "Lamb of God, have mercy upon us!" This appeal springs from the deepest convictions of our souls, of His willingness and His ability to save; and the absolute knowledge that He has saved us!

Now, if there be any of you who have lived, say a score or two or more years, and yet looking ever and

anon in the chambers of your souls, have never made the discovery which I and my fellow Christians have made; never seen a taint of sin in your heart, never discovered the grime of guilt and iniquity; never recognized the weakness of your will; never felt the cravings of the heart for a stronger and mightier than yourselves to hold you up and give you light and blessedness and glory; then all I have to say is, that you have a nature different from and loftier than heathen sage or Christian disciple; for they both equally agree in the weakness and wretchedness of a fallen humanity.

2. I turn now from the personal to another reason for the confession of Christ; and that is the salvation of men. And yet this can hardly be called a transition, for in truth it is but the overflowing of the same principle which makes us seek our own personal salvation. Self-love is *soul-love*. He that loves his own soul, to the reception of the great salvation, comes at once into harmony with the souls of all men, as with God Himself. For the principle of grace, planted in the soul, is the principle of brotherhood. Thus St. Paul, in this same epistle, says: "Speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another." The divine principle received in the soul, while it does not destroy personality, does lift us up and above the isolation of self, into corporate unity with the saints, into

citizenship with the whole family of God, and into brotherhood with the entire species of man! It is just here that self-love, sanctified, differs from selfishness. The one is monstrous absorption in self, the other is gracious generosity to others. St. Paul's first cry at Damascus was, in effect, a personal one, that is, the grasp of his soul after the personal knowledge of the Christ; but the very next was the groping of his spirit after duty to others. And so always, the redeemed and saved soul goes out in longings for the salvation of other immortal souls. You cannot feel and know the value of your own soul without anxiousness and solicitude for the salvation of others.

There is then, you see, in Christianity, a guardianship, a responsibility for souls. It makes every disciple a keeper of the spirits of men. And this springs from two principles, the one of love and the other of duty. Take the latter first, and see how it prompts to zeal for men's well-being and blessedness. Humanity is a common stock, not a special personal possession. Men are our neighbors, all men. On the lowest principle we are bound to care for their bodies, for even the brute beasts show solicitude for the good of their own kind. But men have souls, souls in constant hazard and jeopardy from the assaults of the evil one, the temptations of the world, and from that stolid indifference of their own souls to the things of God, which is one of

the deadliest results of sin. First of all, if they go on in sin they are sure to meet terrible retribution in this world, and perpetual disaster and agony in the world to come. Here then, primarily, is the duty of God's people in this world, to stay the ravages of destructive sin upon human souls. If there were no hereafter, if this life were the only life, it would still be the noblest philanthropy for benevolent spirits to arrest the progress of drunkenness through society; to put a stop to the strifes, the sicknesses, the murders, the miseries and the insanity, which are its fruitful progeny; to ward off from the young and inexperienced the lust and licentiousness which soil the souls of men, and ruin their bodies; to lessen the sum of human evil which is added to by habits of gambling and practices of theft; to quench out malignant passions, which generate the bickerings of families, the feuds of tribes and factions, and the wars of nationalities; and to free the world from the poisonous influences of the principle of selfishness, which is the grandest instrument of the Adversary in the heart of sinful men.

These are some of the blasting fruits of sin, as we see it in this world. Every where it breeds distortion, deformity, destitution and pestilence among men. And the true and proper work of Christianity is to destroy these works of the devil *here*, in this world, which is his chosen field of death and disaster.

But the spirits of men reach over from time into eternity. These spirits, moreover, were made for the grandest purposes of the eternal world. Take the most abject of human beings, the most degraded, the most criminal. Think that he was fashioned by the Creator with a capacity which was to gauge, as far as finite comprehension is able, the attributes of God, and to take in the vast and stupendous economy and the awful decrees of God. And see how every joint of his moral being has become unhinged, every pillar of his grand spiritual nature fractured and prostrate! But alas! millions of such spiritual ruins crowd the lanes and alleys of every civilized land, fill up the vast populations of heathen islands and pagan continents.

Now the work of God's Church is the restoration of these wretched immortals to original simplicity and purity through the blood of Christ and by the power of His truth. Duty to man demands solicitude for his salvation. It is my humanity which is degraded by sin and depravity. I am under the responsibility of a Christian soldier to join in with good men and the Divine Master to uproot the evils of the world.

Added to all this come the promptings of love. Back of all the demonstrations of depravity the Christian discerns the lineaments of a grand and noble nature, fresh, fair, lofty, and majestic, as man was when he first came from the hand of his Maker.

Just as an artist, when he comes upon an old and begrimed picture, the work of some grand master—what cares he for the rust, the tarnish, and the dingy smoke and dust, which hide its beauty from sight? The beauty he knows is there; and his soul is ravished by it, albeit it is yet undisclosed to sight. And he puts himself to zealous, delicate work to get at it. So the soul of sinful man is a beautiful, precious, and a priceless gem. It is the image of the eternal God. All his faculties were made after the fashion of the grandest model. All his capacities are fitted to the noblest ends. Every endowment, however perverted, has a latent aptitude to all the grand conceptions and the lofty schemes which are pleasing to the Almighty, and which attract the admiration of angels. All this power is now unused, all this ability misdirected; but Christians, like their master, have been enabled to see the exquisite finish of the grand machinery of the human soul, and are zealous for its complete restoration and its perfect working, not only for the relations of this life, but above all for the celestial spheres in which it shall engage in the same grand duties which command the zeal of the archangel.

3. One higher reason than all still remains why the confession of Christ is a duty and obligation. Obligations are like the rings which form on the surface of waters when a pebble is thrown into the stream. They

have their natural order, from less to greater. They are at first the tiniest circles. But they expand and grow wider, until, at length, their circumferences touch the opposite banks of a river. The primal orbit of duty is the personal one; but when once the spring of the regenerate heart is touched, then all the limitations of selfish regard are broken, and the outflow of the sympathies and affections becomes both fervid and exhaustless. The fulness and the nobleness of human duty is found in the motives which pertain to the Infinite. It is only when our spirits arrive at the eternal throne that they find the peace which passeth understanding.

The glory of God then is the highest end of a reasonable and a loyal existence. There are certain tendencies planted in our constitution which drive us onward to the highest. There is a prying, penetrating faculty in our nature which makes us restless and dissatisfied when we come to any of the supposed bounds of nature or of spirit. We wish to break beyond the confines of both sense and understanding. The impulse within us is to bound from the finite over into the infinite. God Himself has put this impulse in our nature; and man can never reach repose and satisfaction until this upward tendency is somewhat answered and satisfied.

It is precisely the same with those loyal, reasonable creatures who encircle forever the throne of God in transcendent glory. The angels in heaven are oblivious

to personal regards; they stream forth in burning ardor from their own being to the highest spiritual satisfaction in the service of Jehovah. All their life is spent in praise and adoration. Every glimpse we get in the Bible of their being shows that its master end is the glory of their king. Now angelic life, wherever and in whatever way it discloses itself to our sight in Holy Scripture, is a pattern and a model of what our life should be here on earth. It is one of the steps of a high ladder, by which we are to mount up to God, and show forth His glory.

Observe here that all things are to set forth the divine glory, the inanimate things of creation, and then surely all the spiritual creatures of God.

First, this visible frame of earth, with its light and beauty, the bright heavens above, the majestic sun and its surrounding luminaries, are the primal manifestations of the divine glory. They speak the praise of their Maker.

Then comes man, in his best estate—man, in his saintship and excellence, seen in the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs. The end of this grand galaxy of purity and spiritual brightness is the majesty and glory of God.

Then, in their order, we reach the noble retinue of angels. In shining columns they surround the eternal

throne; but their everlasting theme, alike in every act and joyous song is, "Glory! glory! glory!"

Thus the whole universe is designed for one grand and lofty end,—the praise and honor of the Almighty, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ!"

The train of thought brought before you this morning shows the great dignity of your calling as disciples, the high prerogatives of your position. If you are true and faithful men, you are living under the control of the noblest incentives which can prompt the life and being of any spiritual existences. You are pursuing the ends which challenge all earthly rivalry. No matter how lowly your positions or how ordinary your capacity; you are, by virtue of your lofty motives and your sacred aims, called to be kings and priests to our God. The restoration of a fallen world and the glory of the eternal King, set before you as the great ends of being, make you co-workers with God in all the grand schemes of His endless government.

What a noble function is this for feeble, mortal man! What an exalted privilege! Surely,

A Christian is the highest kind of man.

Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. Strive to be what you seem to be, what you profess to be. Grasp the deepest scriptural convictions, and then strive to express them by decided holiness of

life. Base your religion upon the redemption of Jesus. Show it forth by the strictest morality and the sweetest cheerfulness.

So shall men see and feel that you live with the Lord, that you have learned the secret of the Lord, that you are in very deed, as well as in name, His true disciples, and His faithful followers.

SERMON X.

The Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

THE AGENCIES TO SAINTLY SANCTIFICATION.

COL. I, 10.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

The Epistle for this Sunday is most valuable to us, this morning, as Communicants. For it contains very rich lessons pertaining to the sanctification of saints, and this special verse is chosen from the whole paragraph, inasmuch as it presents, in a condensed form, two or three excellent injunctions bearing upon the subject. In approaching our Lord's Table, as it is our duty to be thinking how we can become better men and women, how we can "grow in grace and in the knowledge of God," the subject of the sanctification of our souls must be a most profitable one for every one of us duly to consider.

You all remember, no doubt, the words of the catechism upon this subject. The children, surely, we trust, will carry them fresh in their memories. After the recitation of the Creed, comes the question, "What

dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?" And the answer is given, "Thirdly, to believe in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God."

Now in this, *three* things are to be noticed :

1st. The meaning of sanctification ; which is the spiritual process by which fallen men become holy.

2d. The prime agent, without whose aid there can be no possible growth in grace, which agency is the power of the Holy Ghost, who is called in the Nicene Creed "the Lord and Giver of life." But

3d. Concurrent with the Holy Ghost is another factor, inferior indeed in the work of sanctity, but nevertheless an indispensable power thereto, and that is our own personal wills. We cannot take a single step in the pathway of holiness without divine assistance. The Holy Ghost was sent into this world to "convince it of righteousness," to "guide us into all truth," to "take the things of Jesus and show them unto us." Without His gracious influences we can do nothing. But in order to become saintly *we* must do something ourselves. The Holy Ghost will never carry us to heaven, without our own wills, and our own holy actions. To be saints we must "work out our salvation with fear and trembling," relying upon God to work "within us to will and to do of His good pleasure." Such is the teaching of St. Paul in the Epistle for the day. It is an

earnest exhortation to use the appointed means adapted to the sanctification of souls.

1. The Apostle enjoins, first of all, that we "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." The idea is that disciples should maintain a regular uniform regard to the will of God, if they would grow in grace and holiness. It is in the will of any beings that they find coincidence and unity. All the pleasure of life springs from the harmony of wills, whether it be in domestic, civil, or natural relations. And this "well pleasing" the apostle speaks of here (or, if you choose, you may call it *satisfaction*), is a sentiment which can only come from that chiming in of man's will with God's, which finds its truest expression in our Lord's prayer—"Thy will be done." In heaven this "well pleasing" is seen in the perfect accordance of angelic with the Divine thought and life. On earth it is only partially expressed in the lives of obedient saints. The command of the apostle, however, is based upon vows and promises. You have pledged yourselves "to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of your life." This obedience is the point of unity between your hearts and the heart of God. Just there the little rivulets of our existence flow into the great ocean of God's eternal being. You gave your pledge to this end in Baptism. You renewed it in Confirmation. You have reasserted it over and over again at God's

Altar in the Commemorative Sacrifice of His Son's death.

Now when the apostle says, "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing," the idea presented is that of congruity. This is not a common word, it is true, but it is the best that can be used. Congruity means somewhat that fits, agrees, or is equal with another. Thus, a picture is expected to conform to the original which it represents. If it does not, it is not a likeness. Thus, a photograph is exact and true, as it represents the face of the original. You look into a mirror; the image must conform to the reality, or else you say the glass is false. You all remember how, when we were children, we laughed at the fable of the greedy dog, his mouth full of meat, crossing a bridge, and who snatched at the piece of meat in the mouth of his own shadow, in the glassy water, and so lost his food. That glassy water gives the idea of a perfect mirror. Above and below, in substance and in shadow, there must be similarity, and then one gets the idea of congruity. Thus the poet sings,—

The swan, on still St. Mary's lake,
Floats double, swan and shadow.

Now St. Paul calls for a like spiritual congruity in the Christian life of disciples. God is our model, and we are to be His likeness. It always was to have been so. The disasters of sin prevented it in our first

parents. But God never gives up His grand primal purposes. Man, from all eternity, was to be the image of God. Transgression has interfered, and endeavored to make man the image of the Evil One. But God sent His blessed Son into the world to redeem us from evil, that we may be "transformed by the renewing of our minds;" that "we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." The entire work of the Holy Ghost, in this dispensation, is by various divine devices to change, modify and elevate our nature, so that we may more and more conform to the divine image, and express, in our lives, the divine character.

In this process the Holy Ghost is the divine agent. But the human will is also an important factor. The sanctification of our nature into the divine likeness is no mere mechanical process. We have to shape and mould ourselves, with divine help, into the image of God. The process by which we shall do this is imitation. That is the grand faculty by which men are enabled to produce in themselves that gracious congruity, whereby they shall secure a likeness to their maker.

The great Edmund Burke says: "The second passion belonging to society is imitation or the habit of imitating." This is the method by which men reach to civilization. They see superiority, and they copy it. It is

precisely the same in the domain of grace. God has revealed Himself in the person of His Son, in Whom resides "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" and who is declared "the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature." Here then, in our Blessed Lord, we have the standard. He is the model by which we may rise up to congruity to the divine character, and approach the beauty of holiness. Jesus is the way; be like Him, live like Him, imitate Him. "He is the image of the invisible God," sent into this world for the express purpose, that man may follow His example, copy His life, and so reflect somewhat the likeness of the Maker.

Walk, then, worthy of the Lord; strive, first of all, to be partakers of the divine nature. For, to show forth God in your life, you must have God in you. Go to Him, live in Him. "Draw water from the wells of salvation." Get rid of yourself. "Give all for all; seek nothing, require back nothing; abide purely and with firm confidence in Christ, and thou shalt possess Him. * * * That being stript of all selfishness, thou mayest with entire simplicity follow Jesus, and dying to thyself mayest live eternally to Him."

And then, next, possessed of the divine nature, show it forth. Let men see that you have been with Jesus, by an unearthly spirit; by zeal for truth; by holy deeds; by a living faith. Set the Blessed Lord distinctly before

you as your Chief, your Guide, and Leader ; and then walk in His footsteps, endeavoring in all things to do as He did, and to walk as He walked.

The result of such divine imitation is sure and certain. You will so show forth in life and character, that divine pattern Who walked in perfectness the paths of life, that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ will look upon you with delight and satisfaction ; and that His voice from heaven will once again descend to earth, and penetrate to your own inner consciousness—"This too is My own beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

2. I turn now to the second injunction of the apostle :—"Being fruitful in every good work." Here congruity comes forth in another form. Likeness to God is to show itself first of all, as we have seen, in similarity. But now the apostle insists upon the show of another characteristic of the Almighty, that is, productiveness. We are to show the divine character in doing, as well as in being. The first requirement of the apostle was—*be* like God. This second one is, *do* as God does. It is laid down, too, as a means to our sanctification, and the relation of the one to the other is manifest. For as the multiplication of evil acts tends to the deepening of depravity in ungodly men, so does the repetition of good acts serve to develop the principle of holiness in our own hearts. This is a matter of both experience and observation. People who are given to offices of kind-

ness, such as visiting the poor, or attending on the sick, or nursing little children, or caring for prisoners, at length beget a passion for such duties. At the beginning of such works they may, perchance, have to spur and stimulate themselves to duty. But the multiplication of holy acts fixes the principle of holiness, until at length the gracious habit is formed, the love rises up with desire, and then almost imperceptibly, there is a gracious thirst in the heart for all the duties and offices of charity and kindness. Those of you who have read the life of Sister Dora, will remember that the longer she continued at the great work of her life, the more ardent became her zeal and devotedness; until at last her holy heart was filled with the flames of a burning zealous love for the diseased, the halt, the lame, the blind and wretched.

Our great pattern, however, is the Lord Jesus Christ. This was one of the two grand ends for which He came into the world. He came to exemplify, in flesh and blood, the capability of man to good works. And how fruitful He was in them! What a tide of generous and gracious acts; nay, what a deep, profound, and mighty river of beneficence was that wondrous life which is our example! Think of His condescending pity to the poor! Think of His generous provision for the hungry! Think of His mighty and marvellous works; so many, that the beloved disciple declares his belief

that if they were all recorded, "the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

This fruitfulness of Jesus in good works brings to my mind that marvellous text He gives us in John v. 17. Did you ever think of this utterance of our Lord? "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."

Just look abroad through all the boundless areas of space. Think of the systems upon systems of worlds, stretching far away beyond the keenest glance of telescopic vision. Think of the probability of the existence of created beings from countless ages in many of these worlds. Astronomers tell us that some of these worlds are hoar with age, dating from vast epochs in the past; and others of them of later, if not of recent origin. I sit down and am overwhelmed at the idea of God's working and weaving worlds upon worlds, through eternal ages; and carrying on through infinitude grand and wonderful schemes of glory and beneficence to myriads upon myriads of creatures; restless, if I may say it with reverence, for divine and gracious activities; coming forth spontaneously from the solicitude of His awful Being, eager to scatter everywhere through boundless space, light, and air, and heat, and glittering dews, and abounding fruitfulness; and in the domain of the spirit—life, sense, reason, spirit, conscience, gifts, graces, and benefactions, upon the spirits of angels and men; working, working, working through vast and endless

eternities. Here, brethren, is the pattern of your sanctified life:—"My Father worketh hitherto and I work." As you imitate this beneficent and all-gracious original, so will you fashion your inner nature more and more to His excellency and glory. Remember then that productiveness is a divine quality; and in saints is a grand means of sanctification. "Being fruitful in good works;" so glorifying God, and so, too, lifting up our souls, to excellence and divine purity.

3. We come now to the third instrumentality mentioned by the apostle for the sanctification of saints: "Increasing in the knowledge of God." *This* agency of divine grace is linked in, if you will notice it, with that which we have been just considering. The apostle seems to present the matter in the form of sequence; as though he would say: if you abound in righteousness, if you are fruitful in good works, then you shall arrive at a higher degree of divine acquaintance. This no doubt is the mind of Saint Paul. It is certainly the teaching of Scripture, and it is the result of experience. Doing always enlightens. When Christopher Columbus started out on the trackless seas in search of a new world, he knew absolutely nothing of that world; but by doing, he grasped the grandest geographical light of all the ages. He sailed across the ocean and discovered a continent. It is precisely the same in all the spheres of knowledge. Science nowhere reveals its secrets, save

by dint of active, prying investigation. This, too, is the key to the knowledge of God. If we are fruitful in good works, the more and more shall we increase in the knowledge of God. Our blessed Lord lays this down as a law of His kingdom. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself."

What is it, my brethren, to have a knowledge of God? Have you ever put this question to yourselves? You know what it is to know a man: say, a father or a friend, a poet or an orator, a Shakespeare or a Milton, a Webster or a Gladstone. It is, as you are aware, to explore his mind, to get a thorough acquaintance with his principles and motives, his plans and purposes, and to come into accord with his desires and aspirations. Is not this what we mean when we speak of knowing a man? What difference can there be with respect to knowing God? Is it not the like apprehension on the part of one spirit with another? To know God, as I understand it, is to look into His mind, to approach the eternal spirit of the universe, to see how God thinks and purposes, and feels and loves, to comprehend as far as we can His grand and majestic nature, to sympathize so as to be in thorough accord and submission with Him. And can you conceive of any mode easier and more effective for the increase of your piety? Will not the approach of your spirit to the eternal spirit, lift you up

to ecstasy? Will you not become fascinated by His beauty? Will not your earthiness necessarily fall off from you? Will not heaven, and heavenly things, perforce, absorb your interest and your thought? Must you not thereby become more and more weaned from temporal regards, and so enraptured with things sacred and eternal?

There can be no need to argue such a question, for the testimony of all the saints in all the ages confirms this truth. Everywhere on earth where men have lived for God, and worked for God, their souls have been advanced to clearer views of His nature, and keener insight into His attributes has gradually but gloriously dawned upon their spirits. Broader apprehensions of God's plans and systems have reached their understanding. And then, as their knowledge of God increased, so their love grew, and their whole nature became more and more conformed to the divine. It may be affirmed as an absolute truth that only those who know not God exclaim: "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? What profit should we have if we pray unto Him?"

On the other hand, the lofty men who have made even the smallest advance in the knowledge of divine things, hunger and thirst to know more. Thus the great moral heathen of ancient times, men who had no

Holy Scripture to guide them, men whose only knowledge of God came from natural religion, expressed the deepest anxiousness to know more of God. Few things are so touching as their lamentations over the narrow range of their acquaintance with the things of God. And then, still further, it is remarkable the rapture of holy men of old over *their* divine knowledge. Says David: "Oh, taste and see how gracious the Lord is." And you all remember the fervid exclamation of St. Paul: "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" And this longing desire and hunger of the saints is not mere intellectual desire or astonishment. No; it is the awakening of a spiritual appetite, it is the opening of the eyes of the soul, it is the stirring up of a moral susceptibility to "comprehend with all saints the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of God which passeth knowledge, yea, and to be filled with all the fulness of God."

With two simple remarks the subject may be closed. *First*, let me say that the subject of discourse to-day, serves to impress us all with a deep sense of our large capacity. We have belittled ourselves by sin; we are constantly more or less dwarfing our being by transgression. But nevertheless, we are creatures of vast ability; we have natures of the noblest powers. No man here

can tell the largeness and the grandeur to which his soul can stretch. No man here can estimate the lofty excellence to which his soul may be fitted. Men do this little thing, they commit that mean act, they go down to vileness, they degrade themselves to infamy. But all this is contrary to our true nature, opposed to the design and destiny for which God made the living spirit of man. "He made him little lower than the angels," and for what? "To crown him with glory and worship." *That* is the end and object of man's existence: glory and worship; and the Holy Ghost is here, *in* the church, to correct and rectify the fallen spirits of men, that they may rise up to their original design.

"Behold," says the Almighty, "all souls are mine!" and He comes, He, the maker of all spirits, by Jesus Christ, with solicitude and grace, to live in the souls of men, and, by the Holy Ghost, to sanctify them with the riches of His grace, to fitness to eternal glory. And so, reciprocally, the souls of men must needs go forth and rise up to meet the divine Father, and make that gracious surrender of themselves and their all, which is salvation and eternal glory.

Into this pathway of holiness press on, without fear and without discouragement. Every possible encouragement is given to cheer the steps of true disciples. Grand spiritual attainment attends their every footfall. The noblest acquisitions await their persistent and

godly perseverance. All the promises of God are theirs. Theirs too all the resources, all the choicest influences of the heavenly powers. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

SERMON XI.

The Third Sunday in Lent.

AFFLUENCE AND RECEPTIVITY.

Ps. LXXXI, 10.

Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

This is a figurative expression, and it indicates that man is a creature of vast spiritual capacity. If it were addressed to our carnal, *i. e.*, our physical nature, we could have no difficulty whatever in understanding it. If, for instance, a friend should invite us to a breakfast party, and should say, "Come with an appetite: eat nothing at home. I know the very things you like, and I want to please and gratify you," not one of us would misunderstand him. The text, however, is addressed to a higher nature than the physical. The appetite to which it appeals is the spiritual one within us. Men are rarely in full consciousness of that deep, strong, original aptitude of human nature for the things of God. For sin has so deeply impaired our nature, that atrophy and nausea have fallen upon our spiritual faculties, and our moral perceptions have become gross and insensible. But the faculties are in us. Notwithstanding the

inroads of guilt and depravity, they have never been extirpated; and the aim of the whole scheme of religion is restoration of our moral being to completeness and its original beauty.

And so the voice of God is ever uplifted, even as at first to Adam in the garden, calling upon man either to know his place in the order of creation; or to awake from the dust to heavenly desires; or to rise up again to worship of God; or to participate in the new creation guaranteed by the Spirit. In the text this morning the call is a very clear one to each and every spirit.

The text shows God's estimate and acknowledgment of man's spiritual capacity. It does not ignore the actual fact of man's depravity. *That* is constantly set before us in the sacred word. But the great Father goes back of all the demonstrations of sin and guilt, to that original constitution which He gave us when He breathed into man "the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Sin has impaired and sullied that divine image, which was then made the crown of man's existence; but it has not entirely extirpated it. Man is still, though sullied and defiled, still the image of God; and God, knowing all the capacity of that divine element in our nature, constantly appeals to it in His Holy Word, and strives, by His holy spirit, to bring out all its force.

In this estimate of man's spiritual capacity God can make no mistake. You can err, for instance, about your

son's ability. You may send him to school or college, intending that he shall outshine all his fellows. Exaggerating his powers, you may demand of him to stand first in his class, outrivalling all his mates. Yet he may disappoint your expectations, because he finds superiors in more than one of his companions. But there can be no such error on the part of the Almighty. He knows every faculty, and the force of every faculty in the spiritual constitution of man; and hence, when we light upon such a passage as the text, and come to understand its deep spiritual meaning, we may learn very much of the largeness and the profundity of that grand spiritual nature which God has given us. The demand, "Open thy mouth wide," is addressed to no shallow and ephemeral quality in any man here this morning. You may be vain and foolish, you may be gross and wicked; but there are fixed and abiding elements in your being, which, though sin may overshadow, it cannot annihilate. The ideas of God and duty, the fitness for responsibility, the spring of the inner nature towards immortal life, the sentiment of love, with its boundless range,—these inhere in the soul of every man. They may lie dormant in the inner caves of our personal existence, unused and encrusted by guilt, but they are integral qualities. Nothing—not guilt, not neglect, not the insane denial of these divine qualities, not even the suicide's hand, can cast out of our being these exalted

powers and prerogatives. There is a section of our being "which cannot, but by annihilating, die." It is a majestic fact, and it brings with it the most awful responsibility that we are beings of a constitution akin to the divine, and that we shall live forever!

Now the reference of the text, in its first section, is to this quality of our nature. When God says, "Open thy mouth wide," he refers to an actual capacity in us, latent though it be, which, quickened by the Spirit, may reach up to heaven in lofty aspirations, and take in all the things of God. So, too, the other portion of the text, for it has two terms: "open thy mouth wide," is one, and "I will fill it," the other. The promise here given us is equally as significant with regard to our nature as is the command. It is a declaration that when the immortal demands of our inner being are once quickened into life, that there is but one Being in the universe who can answer and supply them. And this is another tribute to the splendid capacity of our nature, fallen though it be.

The text implies that no *man* can meet this special need of the soul. Man is a creature fitted to very great helps and assistances to his fellow-man. Man supplies the bodily, the mental, even some of the spiritual needs of his fellow creatures. So, too, the angels of God. They also are grand ministers to human needs and requirements. They come to us with divine succors

and spiritual gifts. But, both with regard to angels and men, there is one identical fact, which separates *their* functions and offices, by an almost infinite distance, from the secret gifts of the Almighty. The work of men and angels in our behalf is an intermediate work. *They* are but instrumental in their beneficence. The good they do is not from original sources in themselves, but comes indirectly from a higher being. But the text is a declaration that there is a supreme and infinite need, the supply of which is God's exclusive prerogative. There is a point in our nature which only the Almighty can reach. There is a substance and a gift, which no created being can furnish. They lie beyond and above finite and limited power, and are given over to the soul of man direct and immediate from the gracious heart of God Himself. And hence the entreaty of the text, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it"; because God only *can* fill these infinite needs of the immortal soul!

Having reached this point in our consideration of the text, having learned, to some extent, what we are, and what we are capable of through grace, we can now advance to an important question suggested by the text, and that is, What is the reach you are going to make in divine holiness? How far will you stretch forth in godly desires and aspirations? Or will you hem yourself in by gross and carnal limitations?

Now, unless there is some great mistake in the statement, there is nothing very obscure in dealing with this question. The Gospel sets this matter very clearly before us, as a most practical subject in all its aspects. The scriptural line of spiritual culture, which will serve to answer the demand made in the text, is the call of God to our internal being, "Raise yourself up to large spiritual desires! Stretch the hands of your soul to vast spiritual acquisitions! Lay hold of the treasures of the eternal kingdom! Claim and gain the inexhaustible riches of Christ!" In what way shall we do this?

According to the relations of our common human nature, there are three special functions of the soul of man, which, properly exercised, will bring us to perfect and cordial obedience to the demands of the text: First, the attainment of a high order of morals; second, the exercise of duty, that is, the performance of good works; and, third, the rise of the soul to a state of lofty spirituality.

It is evident that this is not the natural order. The spiritual acquisition is the base, is the radical foundation of all the divine aptitudes. But, for convenience, we will approach this, the highest acquisition, in the reverse order; for, in this manner, it will, most likely, serve both your and my soul the larger advantage.

First of all, then, if you would attain to a lofty, grand preëminence of spiritual growth, fix it in your

minds to be men and women of a high order of morals. Not as though the advice be given to begin with morality. God forbid! The beginning of all true soul-life is in the spiritual; but, assuming that you *are* spiritual, that you have repented and believed, and that, having entered upon the Christian life, led by the Spirit of grace, you are anxious to reach the stature of perfect men in Christ. Lay the foundations of your piety deep in the purest morals! Settle it as an axiom in religion that there is no such thing possible as true godliness without morality. If you will carefully consider the matter, you will see, at a glance, this deep necessity.

For, first of all, what is a true spiritual life in any man's soul? It is, without doubt, the forming of the divine character within. It is the approach, by as rapid stages as possible, to the image of God, by the influence of the Holy Ghost and the concurrent energy of our own wills. In this process, the moral law acts in two ways to our growth and elevation. It is a result, first of all; and then, by reflex action, it is a cause. Moral obedience is, first of all, one of the first results of felt spiritual life within us. One of the foremost impulses of a converted soul is conformity to God's will. Nay, more and higher than this: conversion itself is the setting in of the tides of the human will unto the will of God. What God wills, we will. What God condemns, we reject with aversion and abhorrence. All our likes,

on the one hand, all our desires, all our tendencies, all our feelings, all our affections, all our loves, turn to be just the same as God's. As God loves truth and justice, purity and virtue, light and excellency, so do we. It is the sure and certain sign of a converted soul, that it runs in the channels, flows with the currents of the perfect will of God.

Take the aspect of the case just the reverse of this: observe the things which God rejects and discountenances. Run down the line of the Ten Commandments, and note the crimes which are condemned therein. Can you suppose, for a moment, a loyal, spiritual heart in the brotherhood of the Church, deliberately, wilfully, and habitually living in such sins? Can you imagine pure spirits in Paradise contemplating with pleasure a breach of these laws? Can you conceive the possibility of an angel in heaven looking with satisfaction upon the least infraction of the moral law?

No! It is the instinct of all true saintship, that the very first fruit of the spiritual soul is conformity to law. It is the immediate and direct result of the divine life in us to bring us into happy acquiescence with divine morality. The spontaneous outgrowth of the divine life is excellence.

Set it down, then, among your deepest convictions that to be lofty saints you must be sternly and severely moral. Let that truth be, as it were, the gauge of your

piety. Alas, we live in an age when we oftentimes see but little difference between the Church and the world! We live in times when, on every side, the wide separation of morality from religion is too plainly apparent! And hence the spots and stains upon the Church of Christ, the taint in the character of so many professed disciples, the scoff of the world at the claims of the Gospel! How glorious will be the influence of Christ's religion when the world shall see the saints everywhere in conflict with unrighteousness, and their lives "unspotted from the world." Make this the one supreme ambition of your souls. Strive to be good. Let the pitch of your sanctitude be a very high one. Harass yourselves with discontent whenever you see the deviation of your souls from the rigid line of moral rectitude. St. Paul, even before he saw the Crucified, could declare, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law—blameless!" Surely, we, having seen, by faith, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, must rise to a purer standard than his legal conformity. Let us, with strong spiritual desire, reach forth to the highest and the purest. "Open thy mouth wide!" Determine, by God's help, to live the strictest lives, and by the Spirit's aid to attain stainless holiness. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this pres-

ent world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

But observe, next, that another stretch of the soul to high spiritual excellence is to be attained by the exercise of duty, that is, the doing of good works. Practical goodness bears somewhat the same relation to eminent piety that husbandry does to the production of good crops, or the care of the gardener to the growth of beautiful flowers. It is, under God, the actual uplifting of the soul from one degree of holiness to another. It is the cultivation of the Christian graces; and, observe, all true cultivation tends to growth and expansion.

Now there are two kinds of piety in the church; one is your passive, inactive, undemonstrative piety, which sits in the centre and lives by itself. The other is your active, gracious, productive piety, which overflows in goodness and mercy to others. And this—you can tell it almost in the dark; you can see it with but half-open eyes. It is visible to sight, if even you are veiled:—for it is so big a thing, it has so much magnitude, that you cannot mistake it. Do you not know people in your circle, always ready to work for Christ, to give for Christ, to sacrifice for Christ, quiet as babes in speech about holiness, active as bees and beavers in works of

righteousness? What a greed there is in such people for Sunday-school work; for relief of the sick; for help to the needy; for care of the orphan; for gifts to the church; for society labors; and yet how unconscious of their own goodness, how unostentatious in the show of their real piety.

Now, in all such cases there has been a stretch of the soul after sanctity; an eager reaching forth of the spirit after saintliness. In the inner chambers of such souls, there has been heard the divine demand:—"open thy mouth wide;" and the eager spirit has rushed forward for duty, in the line of good and gracious deeds. It was this quest and anxiousness put into their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which gave birth to all their holy deeds. It was perchance the sensitive living question, welling up from a soul full of gratitude for the great salvation vouchsafed it by a living Saviour: "What wilt thou have me to do?" and then the instant obedience in the Christian work, right at hand, which called for duty. From that beginning has flowed those other generous deeds and patient zealous efforts, which have glorified Christ among men. And always, in such cases, the fruit which duty yields has been a certainty. You cannot labor in charities and gracious duty for Christ without His blessing. St. Paul says in one place, "As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing

all things. O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged." It was this very beneficence of his generous, overflowing soul enriching others, which served to enlarge his heart. Indeed, if you get out of self, if you range beyond the circumference of personal regards, greatness and nobleness are your sure reward, whether you are conscious or unconscious of it. There seems to be a capacity in the generous soul to add on other souls to its own; to bring the tides of other lives into the reservoir of its own spirit life. This is the enlargement to which St. Paul refers. By doing good to others for Christ's sake, we expand our own being; we multiply the force of our sympathies and affections; we reduplicate the power of our loving energy; we live over again, in personal experience, the saintly life of philanthropists and good Samaritans; we chime in with the beneficence and graciousness of ministering angels; yea, above all, we become co-workers with Christ our Saviour, in all the invisible healing restoration and renewing of His blessed life.

And so it will follow that obedience to the text will show itself, in the purposed rise of the soul to a high spirituality. This topic is left for the last, because it is the most important; it is the very base of all spiritual acquisition. In the domain of the spirit, spiritual things, spiritual aims, spiritual efforts, spiritual longings, are the foremost of all things. If you are not

spiritual, not uplifted above flesh and the world, holding both body and sense in subjection, then you can entertain no vast desires ; nor can you feel the motions of any large and masterful cravings of the soul, for light, for excellence, for divine beauty, as personal possessions. By the word spiritual is meant something plain and apparent to sense ; and in no way extravagant and fanatical. It is not, as some would suppose, to be angels or disembodied spirits, but it is to be men and women *in* the flesh, but above it ; serving Christ by the impulses of the Spirit dwelling in us ; using the world as but an instrument ; “ bringing every thought unto the obedience of Christ.” See how St. Paul defines this fact of spirituality. “ They,” he says, “ that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit.” “ But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

So much, then, for the ideal or principle descriptive of what is spiritual life. And now we can turn for a moment to the evidence that is to be found in ourselves that we have this principle implanted in us. That evidence discovers itself in those characteristic spiritual acts of the soul, into which, as sons of God, the saints are led by the Spirit of God. And here the whole field of saintly life lies spread out before us, so that we cannot err. All of its rich productiveness is the fruit of the Spirit. It brings to our sight, in exceeding brilliancy, the faith and prayerful mightiness of Abraham; the calm meditateness of Isaac; the crystal purity of Joseph; the serene and unspotted godliness of Samuel; the burning flames of Elijah; the calm constancy of David; the stern self-sacrifice and zealous fervor of the Baptist; the fiery ardor of holy Paul; the loveliness of St. John the divine.

These lives, these extraordinary characters are facts. They are the productive fruit of both that spiritual longing, and that internal spiritual endeavor of living souls, which rose up in rebellion against the dominion of sense, and fought an effectual warfare with the flesh; and so, through grace, reached forth to sanctity. Never would God's church have gained to herself the bright example of such lives, save by the fastings and watchings, the patience and humility, the afflictions and distresses, the supplications and the prayers of earnest

men, who were determined to attain in some measure the divine and heavenly, even while tabernacling in the flesh. For there is verily a power given by the Spirit to saintly souls, to fasten their attention upon "the things which are not seen," and which "are eternal." The faith and love of the heart can be so uplifted that even mortal man may hunger and thirst after righteousness. There is a state and condition reached by holy men and women, wherein the saints watch and wait with anxiousness for the coming of their Lord. Such glorious spirits entered the kingdom of God, expecting large things. They were the violent, who seized upon the things of God with loving ardor and burning desires. They "opened their mouth wide," and God filled it. And so from small spiritual beginnings, they reached the stature of perfect men in Christ.

The sum of what has been advanced may be stated as enforcing these two lessons. 1st. That you must avoid as though it were death, the idea of spiritual finality, in the attainments of grace. Never think you have enough of God and God's Spirit. Never be satisfied with any successes you have reached in holiness. You will always find, if you will only seek it, somewhat higher, holier, divine and ineffable, in the heavens above, in God around you, which you need, and which by God's grace you can get hold of. Never pause in your career,

saying to the deceived and languid soul, "Rest and be thankful." But press on ever to higher, nobler, and more spiritual heights.

And, 2d, the other lesson taught us by this subject is that there is a law of progress implanted in our nature, which has no limitation. No man here can tell how high he can go in excellence—how far he can reach in godly purity. In the very idea of immortality is implied somewhat that is limitless and unconfined; and so we can by God's grace, stretch out farther and farther, until we are lost in God Himself. O grand and noble acquisition! O blessed and heavenly consummation! May the Spirit of God, now present with us in holy worship, put this desire and purpose in every heart. May this be the divine gift to every soul here to-day; but especially, for those persons who this morning have given themselves to God in Holy Baptism. All of you here this morning will join in this prayer alike, for the little maiden and the mature man, who have made their vows before men, the holy angels, and our God, at this altar; and so, too, for the other persons and the children who this evening will give themselves up to Christ, in Holy Confirmation. No better beginning could they make than this, for it is God's way. Only remember that the river on which you have embarked has no end; that the ocean on which you sail is shoreless. Carry to God the intensest desires of your spirit. "Open thy mouth wide, and He will fill it."

SERMON IX.

CHRIST RECEIVING AND EATING WITH SINNERS.

The eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

ST. LUKE, XV : 2.

And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying: This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

This is a charge made by the Pharisees against our blessed Lord. To understand its point and significance, we must needs pause for a moment to consider the character of the men who brought the accusation.

The Pharisees were the most numerous and powerful of the different sects which, at that time, existed among the Jews. Their chief characteristic was the claim to superior moral purity. So far as the Law, in its literal outward requirement, was concerned, doubtless they were strict and rigid observers of it.

Our Lord in a parable, represents a Pharisee as standing before the Almighty, and pleading in His presence his own personal purity. No truer picture could have been drawn of this self-righteous sect. Their whole mind was set upon mere outward observances; utterly regardless of the inner spirit and purpose of the Law.

They practised the most rigid nicety in all external matters. There was not a rite or ceremony commanded in the Law, which they did not strictly keep. They were the most thorough and fanatical legalists the world ever knew, and they were nothing more. And yet this people knew nothing of the true spirit of religion. They were the greatest extortioners of the age. They were the most grievous oppressors of the poor, the orphan, and the widow. They indulged in the most cruel, relentless, and unforgiving hate. They waged a ceaseless warfare against all real truth, all lofty sacred purity. As Jews, they subverted all the high and gracious purposes of the moral law; and as subjects of the Roman government, they were constantly plotting sedition and fomenting rebellion.

These were the men who were the fiery and malignant persecutors of our Lord. With minds intent upon the petty minutiae of the mere letter of the Law, they were incapable of understanding the lofty purity, and the glowing excellence of the Great Teacher, who came from God. The strong contrast of their puerile, trifling legalism, with His broad humanity and divine spirituality, only excited their hate. Hence, the Pharisees were constantly using every possible annoyance to bring to bear, against our Lord, all the artillery of their malignant opposition. No lies were too venomous for their tongues. They went everywhere, now among the Jews,

and now among the Romans, infusing the poison of their malice, with the ultimate purpose of compassing His destruction.

It is singular, however, that in the case before us, the Pharisees stumbled for once upon the truth. No credit, however, is due to them for their veracity, for it was unintentional. Their purpose was a bad one. Their object was to detract from our Lord's holiness, and to bring Him into such universal unpopularity, that the people, in a frenzy of violent rage, might bring about His destruction.

Their end was at last accomplished. The purpose for which they had striven with such intense desire is at length successful. He is nailed to the cross, the victim of Jewish malice, mainly brought about by the Pharisees; but their malicious charge survives and abides forever, as the crowning glory of the Redeemer: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

The accusation brought against our Lord was true. He *did* receive sinners, and eat with them. His disciples never attempted to conceal this fact; but, on the other hand, they have again and again recorded it in Holy Scripture, and thus spread abroad through all the world this manifestation of His sympathy with those whom He came to save. Believers, in these days, have no desire to deny this charge. On the contrary, we single out *this*, among the divers other peculiarities of

our Lord's life, as a marked and precious trait of His pure and gracious character. And this not because of the inevitable fact that in this world He could find none others but sinners with whom to associate. We fall back upon no such miserable platitude as this, in explanation of the charge. We acknowledge the truth of this Pharisaical libel. We admit fully the indictment which was made by these men; nay, we recognize and avow its exact and literal truth. What they fling at the head of our Master as the most blackening calumny, we gladly accept as a token of the tenderness and compassion of Him who came to seek and to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. True, *they* meant it as a grievous charge that He companied with people who had been gross and impure in character. We accept the accusation in this, its barest sense, and hold it up as an integral and vital element in the character of our Saviour. For, first, it was one of the everlasting purposes of the Messiah to quit, in the fulness of the times, the glories of heaven, and to condescend to the estate and companionship of sinners. Having laid aside, as it were, His divinity, and taken upon Him our nature, He purposely chose to associate, not with the holy angels of heaven, not with glorified saints who had been purged from earthly taint and sinfulness, but with guilty men, sinful as ourselves, human beings conceived in sin and born in iniquity. Just such sinners He first of all

called to Himself, to be His chosen companions and apostles, and just such He admitted to His favor and closest intimacy. And then, afterward, He gathered around Him the very outcasts of the earth ; men bruised, wounded, lacerated, both in body and soul ; beggars, cripples, lepers, publicans, harlots, those possessed with the devil ; but through His power and His aid now freed from iniquity and rejoicing in the light. This accusation, then, so far as it was a formal charge, made with all the bitterness of personal malignity, was true. We take no account, just here, of the animus which prompted it. We waive, for the moment, altogether, the hateful purpose of His accusers, and admit, without reservation, that this man, our Lord and Master, “received sinners and ate with them.”

Let us see how we can account for this fact, which the Pharisees brought forward as a bitter charge against Him. Of necessity, our resort must be to *character*, for a satisfactory reason for this singular choice, on the part of so exalted and so pure a person as was our Lord. The Scriptures set before us the essential elements of His character, wherein we see justice and power on the one hand, truth, love, and mercy on the other. You will observe these traits are divided into two classes. In which of them resides the quality which moved our blessed Lord, as by an overpowering impulse, to minister and mingle with the vile, the wretched, the

miserable, bestowing upon them His tender offices and His healing love?

Now, if *justice* alone had been the master attribute in His character, the world would never have seen His wondrous person, nor witnessed His saving works; for the direct and legitimate tendency of simple justice is retribution and wrath. If *power* were His leading quality, it would never have discovered to our sight His gracious assiduities. Indeed, neither of these elements in the divine character, considered by itself, tends to that pitifulness which shows itself in our Lord's reception of sinners.

Great and majestic as was the Lord of life, it was not these peculiarities which made Him the friend of sinners, the benefactor of the lost and wretched. No! that stream of blessedness and restoration burst forth from the everlasting fountain of love which flows from the heart of Jesus. Mercy and pitifulness are the source, the original spring-head from which proceed that graciousness and favor which attracted men to the feet of Jesus, and held them there by the magnetic force and the irresistible attractions of His glorious person. Now love shows the brightest when bestowed upon the evil and undeserving. Mercy is essentially tenderness to the lost. It may not be bestowed upon angels, for the legitimate objects of mercy are beings who are fallen and degraded. Indeed, all the tender,

generous qualities shine more brightly, vividly, and with more burning lustre, in proportion to the degradation and unworthiness of the beings upon whom they are bestowed. Generosity to the worthy, kindness to the virtuous, love to the lovable, are always pleasing, and cannot fail to give us satisfaction; but when we see gentleness to the brutal, mercifulness to the violent and cruel, love bestowed upon the hateful and malignant, then it is that our wonder is excited, and we are transported to the profoundest admiration.

This is the very characteristic of the love of Jesus. It is such exuberant, overflowing love, that it could not be confined to the circles of obedience and perfection in heaven. That the son of God should love the holy angels, that His complacency should flow out in affluence to the myriad hosts that surround Him in the realms of glory, seems at once natural and legitimate to the simplest apprehension; for it is the stream of love running in its own currents, and flowing back again into its wonted channels. And we stand and gaze upon it with delight and admiration; but not with astonishment, not with surprise.

But the love of Jesus overleaps the confines of heaven. It flows out beyond the precincts of the celestial realm. It runs outside the ranks of obedient angels. It will not brook the limitations of the circles of light. It bursts beyond the height of heaven, and seeks to

bless the masses of the guilty and benighted men that tread the face of earth. Yes! the boundless hosts of cherubim and seraphim are too small a field for the love of Christ, and it seeks a larger sphere for its exercise; even the mighty armies of evil, which lift up defiantly their banners of rebellion against the very maker who preserves them, and the bruised and merciful Saviour who died for them.

Here, then, is the root of the sentiment which led Jesus to receive sinners. We have only to turn to and consider the love of Christ; how broad, how strong, how deep, how high it is; and we have at once a full solution of the fact which excited the proud and malignant Pharisee, and prompted the bitter sneer: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."

Again, let us look at the fact which we have already conceded, and observe its wonderful reality.

Our Lord's ministry covered the space of three years, and the whole of this period was spent among the guilty and the lost. So lowly was the character of those who, in multitudes, gathered around Him, that at last the common saying was everywhere heard, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."

At the end of three years our Lord was crucified. He rose again the third day and ascended into heaven. But the work which He began on earth did not cease. The society which He had organized before His death

went immediately to work to carry out His plans and to fulfil His purposes, and so the work of receiving sinners, which began during His earthly sojourn, has been carried on unceasingly on earth since His Ascension. And still JESUS is the person who Himself is ever receiving sinners ; for His church and ministry are only the agents and servants of an invisible, but mighty presence, ever working in heaven and earth to save and restore the lost. When we baptize children or adults, when we teach and catechise and preach, when we invoke the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands in Confirmation, when we receive sinners as guests at His Holy Altar, it is all done in the name of the Lord Jesus. We are only His instruments. The ministry does not come from man. The ministry does not derive its authority from the people. The ministry, like the church, is from Christ, and is His agency. And *He* it is, Himself invisible, Who receives and blesses. And thus it is, through the ages all along, that He has been receiving sinners. He has gathered them in from every nation and clime and tongue and people under the sun, into that new kingdom and new citizenship which marks and distinguishes the Church of God. Never for a day, never for an hour, since He ascended from Mt. Olivet, has there been a pause in this great work. And never have there been sinners too low, too depraved, too brutal, too filthy, or too vile, for Jesus to receive them.

What a mighty company, too, is this whole vast multitude of sinners, who have been received by Jesus ! Multitudes upon multitudes ! Myriads upon myriads ! Now washed in the blood of the Lamb, and rejoicing in glory ; millions also now upon earth, passing through great tribulations, but steadily and with unswerving faith pressing on to the eternal city.

In this company we see a few great sinners ; men whose criminality was somewhat monstrous, whom Jesus received. They were great sinners ; but the love of Jesus was greater than their sin, and He took compassion on them. He drew them out of the pit of pollution and received them.

There was Matthew, the Publican, one of that large class of ruthless men who were the curse of the age. Jesus received him and made him an apostle. There was Mary Magdalene, out of whom were cast seven devils. There was Peter, who denied his Master with oaths and curses, which makes it probable that he had been before a coarse blasphemous fellow, and that this was one of his old sins suddenly cropping out again. There was the thief on the Cross, received in his last extremity, and privileged to accompany our Lord into Paradise.

And then there were beggars, and lunatics, and blind men, and the palsied, and lepers. Multitudes, filthy and degraded, alike in body and in soul, whom Jesus received,

restored, and blessed while He was upon this earth, and then left them rejoicing in the Lord who saved them.

But this reception of sinners ceased not when He went up in glory into the heavens. Ever since, through His church, the same great and gracious work has been carrying on, to the glory of His grace. It began immediately after His ascension—three thousand of His enemies in one day, at the preaching of St. Peter. Then the Ethiopian eunuch ; soon after, Saul, the persecutor. Then the apostles went everywhere preaching ; converts were made, and the Lord received them ; Cornelius the centurion, and heathen men in Asia, in Greece, in Rome, and all through Europe. There was Augustine, a heathen profligate, and Jesus received him. There was Constantine the Emperor, a brutal, sanguinary heathen, but Jesus received him. Think of what the Romans were, cruel, domineering, bloody, and brutal. And yet in three centuries this great empire was converted from heathenism, and Jesus received them. Think of the Muscovites, and the Scandinavians—the original inhabitants of northern Europe—marauders, pirates, blood-thirsty savages ; but Jesus received them, and to-day they are the most Christian nations of Europe ! Think of the Sandwich Islanders, the Fejians, the New Zealanders—naked, brutal cannibals ; but Jesus has received them, and now they are clothed and in their right mind, sitting at the foot of the Cross !

There was Colonel Gardner, a lewd, riotous man ; there was Lord Rochester, gross and blasphemous ; there was John Bunyan, vile, infamous and degraded ; there was John Newton, a heartless slave-trader ; there was a Fejian chieftain, who had put father, mother, and scores of his family to death, and then eaten of their flesh ; there is Samuel Crowther, born a pagan, and now a Christian bishop. Nay, more, there are thousands of drunkards, and thieves, and murderers, and harlots, and rakes, who have been turned from sin to righteousness, who have given up iniquity, and gone in tears and sorrow and repentance to Jesus ; and He has had mercy upon them, and received them ! And here, too, are we, this morning, miserable sinners, but saved by the blood of the Cross.

And now, once more, turn to the text, and notice another feature of it. The Pharisees sneered at our Lord for another reason besides His reception of sinners. There was another act of His which gave them great offence. “This man receiveth sinners,” was their charge ; “*and He eateth with them.*” Yes, to eat with sinners was an unpardonable sin in the sight of these self-righteous Pharisees. Contact with the wicked they thought would defile them. But the blessed Lord of life, sinless, spotless, and undefiled, *He* condescended to the vilest sinners ; for it was for their sakes He came into the world. To do them good was His noble pur-

pose; to draw them away from sin was his anxious desire; to raise them up to purity and godliness His unceasing effort. And therefore He presented all the attractions of the Godhead to their sight, so as, by personal association, to enlighten and to sanctify them.

Yes! He ate with sinners: at one time five thousand, and at another seven—men, women, and children; and they, the common, the lowly, and the vulgar, were His guests. He ate with fishermen. He ate with people who had been possessed with devils. He ate with the despised Samaritans. He ate with Publicans and sinners.

Consider the significance of eating with our fellow creatures. You walk with a man; but the act is indifferent, for you might walk with a horse or a dog. It does not necessarily show any community of feeling. You talk with a man; but yet you may keep him off as a hireling or an enemy. You travel with a man, and yet hold him cheap, as though he were a nobody. But how different when you sit down at a table and eat with a man! The act signifies equality. It recognizes the dignity of your fellow-man. It acknowledges his manhood. It indicates respect and fellow-feeling. When you eat salt with a man, when you break bread with him, you show thereby sociality and friendship. Seat a beggar at your table, and you make him your guest. Put your servant at it, and you raise him to be your equal.

Just this was the purpose of our Saviour. His eating with sinners was no formal, empty, and unmeaning thing. It was a transaction pregnant with significance. It was full of life and import. Our Lord received sinners as His friends and brethren. He ate with sinners to show them His real, hearty interest in them. He wished them to understand that He was in thorough accord with them ; that He really partook of their common humanity ; that He was, in very deed, their friend and brother ; and that, as a brother, He participated in all their common interests, and in their simplest ordinary joys and comforts.

Our Saviour had another object in view in eating with sinners. He wished to teach His followers, what no other religion but ours ever taught, that is, the brotherhood of man. That spirit of caste which then separated the nations kept men of different tribes apart, and alienated different peoples. But in the Church of God all these distinctions vanish. If men will be disciples of Christ, they must all come as equals in His Church and to the same table. They must all eat of the same holy food, they must drink from the same chalice. Jesus can eat at His table with *any* man, no matter what tribe he belongs to, what race he hails from, what blood courses his veins, what color tinges his brow. When people refuse, to any class of men, to do what Jesus has ever done, they cut themselves off

from their Lord and lose the brotherhood of the Christ. And so the Supper of the Lord comes down to our day, an institution rebuking everywhere the distinction of caste, and binding all men, of all varieties and conditions, in Christian love and brotherhood in the Church.

Nor was our Saviour content to do this only during the days of His earthly sojourn; and hence He instituted a feast for perpetual observance in His Church, at which, although invisible, He promises, and we recognize His perpetual presence: here He comes and eats with sinners, making Himself known in the breaking of bread.

And so, all through the ages, Jesus has continued doing what He did when on earth, and caused the foolish Pharisees to sneer at Him. He has been receiving sinners, and eating with them—sinners, the lowest and most wretched earth has ever produced, but who have turned from sin, and beheld, with penitent and loving eyes, “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.”

Turn back again, if but for a moment, to the noted sinners, of whom mention has already been made; and remember that Jesus received all these sinners, and that Jesus ate with them; for not only did He sit with sinners at His table during the days of His earthly pilgrimage, but ever since He has provided a feast, at which, although unseen, He still deigns to preside. It

is your Master who spreads the Eucharistic table. He makes the Eucharistic feast. It is your Saviour who pours the wine and gives the bread. It is in this, as well as in other ways, Jesus has been receiving sinners and eating with them in all ages of the Church. That fact, which was the sneer of the Pharisee, He makes an unchangeable ordinance in His Church. That truth He has perpetuated by living and unmistakable signs, as a memorial of His abiding love and friendship.

And so you who come here to-day to be received by Jesus, and to eat with Him, do not fail to be as cordial to your fellow-sinners, your fellow-communicants, as Christ Jesus is to you. "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." And therefore I bid you all, coming here to this table, to put aside all animosities, all pride and self-importance, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted and forgiving. "And be at peace among yourselves," "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace."

SERMON XIII.

THE DISCIPLINE OF HUMAN POWERS

The Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.

2 TIM. II: 3.

Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

There are two senses in which we can take this exhortation of St. Paul. We may understand the word hardness in the sense of suffering and tribulation; or we may regard it as referring to trial—that general trial which is equivalent to the discipline of life in its various stages, out of which comes such vigorous strength as fits men for the changes and chances of life. The Apostle seems to refer to this latter signification rather than to the former—not indeed to the exclusion of the idea of suffering. For it was then a time when the whole Christian Church had much to endure, when distress and tribulation were the universal condition of the faithful servants of God.

This address, however, to Timothy, who was then little more than a youth, would seem to be equivalent to counsel somewhat of this sort: “Resist the seductions of ease. As a Christian man and minister, put away

the inducements to mere gratification. Choose rough usage in the Christian life. Task your powers with severity. Take rigidity as the rule of life, and make discipline your habit." "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." This exhortation is addressed to no particular section of our being. It is evidently general in its meaning, befitting every segment of our constitution, applicable to the whole apparatus of our nature. Hence the discipline of life is not merely a corrective of the body, giving license to the intellectual powers or to the spiritual faculties ; but it is to subject the *whole* man to rule. And so St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Now as St. Paul indicates hardness as an instrument to the sanctification of his son Timothy, it is evident that it must reach every part of his being, and that the whole man be brought under the discipline which the text implies and teaches. In this sense, and with this wide meaning, I propose to address you upon the text before us.

1. First of all, then, reversing the order of the text, as it is written, I wish to exhort to endurance with regard to the body. It is one of the greatest of our personal and moral needs. In the original state of man this necessity did not exist. There was *then* such

a correspondence, such a genial concord between the animal and the spiritual of man's being, that all his constitutional tendencies were harmonious, and beautiful, and free. But man's departure from original righteousness has caused that internal disruption in his being, whereby, to use St. Paul's language, "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth against the flesh." It is this antagonism, this aim of the fleshly desires to get the ascendancy over man, which creates the duty and necessity of bodily discipline. In speaking of the flesh, it is not meant that there is any guilt in matter, any sin in our bodies. The word is a figurative expression, which signifies our carnal tendencies, of which the body is the master instrument. But the two are so thoroughly identified, that a single word serves to give a most distinct and unmistakable impression. Everybody understands by the flesh the whole apparatus, internal and external, of gross and carnal desires.

Now we maintain that the flesh, as thus defined, and the body especially, as its agent, is to be brought under rule and into subjection to the habits of endurance.

At all times, under all circumstances, this is a duty. But the urgency of it comes especially in our day and in our country. It may be doubted if there ever was a time, since the days of degenerate and luxurious Rome, when ease, indulgence, and keen worldly self-enjoyment

were such universal objects of desire. It is not of indulgence in gross sins, or of the prevalence of abominations that I am speaking. What I have reference to is the tendency to softness, the anxiousness we see on every side to avoid hardness and severity of duty. In every sphere of life one sees a shrinking from hardy toil, a reluctance to meet the strain and tug of tasking, physical endeavor. Then, next to this negative aspect of the case, one cannot fail to observe the ambition for all the agencies and appliances which minister to ease and delightful relaxation.

Remember, then, that our bodies are the agents and the instruments of work in this world. Man's "staff of accomplishment" in material effort is his body and its members. If it is strong and vigorous, so much the more effective can it be in the work of life. If it is impaired and feeble, by just so much does it meet with hindrance and encounter opposition. We are not responsible for the constitution with which, in infancy, we came into this world. If that is strong, well; if weak, that is our misfortune; but even in that event, we are responsible for the powers we have, feeble though they be, and our duty is to use them to the best advantage, and to train them to the highest tone and vigor for the service of life. And surely nothing can be more evident than that men and women who are sluggards, people who indulge in soft, luxurious, and

heating beds, people who shun the cares and burdens of life, the youths who want their fathers to do everything for them, whose highest ambition is to skim along the surface of existence with hands of baby softness, begloved and be-scented, so delicate and gentlemanly that they can neither handle a hoe, nor wield an axe ; or the girls, so refined and elegant that they lack the muscle to scrub a floor, wash their clothes, or cook, with their own dainty fingers, a meal of victuals—creatures of such a frame and with such habits, where can they get the physical energy which is needed for the work of life, in the Family, the Church, and the Nation ? The enervating habits of life cannot yield to any of us strength and bodily vigor. If you banish the cares of life and strive for ease, if you work little and play much, if you indulge in revelry, if you avoid active and healthful toil, then it is very certain that the body will grow weaker and weaker, and lassitude and feebleness will ensue, as the certain and direct result. With the physical weakness which is the result of indolence comes the mental dullness, which is its legitimate fruit. It is your strong, robust men who *live*. Mind, I say they live, not stay. They live, both mentally and physically. A paralysed man may *stay* here in the world ninety years, and *be* nothing, and *do* nothing. A weak and sickly man, if he have conscience and will, may do much in the world. Such paradoxes are seen. But, as

a rule, it is your strong men who perform the greatest achievements. They make the great statesmen, the great thinkers, the great preachers, the great workers of the world. Even if they live but a brief time, they crowd into a lifetime the vast and wonderful works, which tell, not only upon their own generation, but which go down with lasting influence through after ages.

The basis of life, then, is the strength and endurance which come from exercise, right living, and proper habits. If men will not, by these means, secure a sound condition of their flesh and blood, they must surely fail, as well in body as in mind. To do the work of life we must have somewhat of a sound bodily constitution. And to attain this grand advantage in the battle of life, begin first of all with the appetites and passions. Keep the body down. Bridle its lawless lusts. Avoid the heating stimulants which send the blood racing through the veins with the heat and the speed of lightning, and which sweep away the brains. No bodily endurance can be gained without these precautions, no animal strength secured without these yokes. Put the rein upon yourselves in all these outward aspects of your nature. Husband your powers, and so get strength for maturity, and preserve vigor for old age. Even if you have feeble constitutions you will find these rules of abstinence and regulation powerful tonics for the acqui-

sition of physical endurance. And then, next to this, for the practical habits of life, it is well for us all to avoid luxurious and pleasing habits for the body, and to accustom ourselves to stirring employments, vigorous exercise, and plain living. I do not say that comfort should be shunned; rather, I say, we should seek comfort in life. But if we would have physical endurance we must not nurse ourselves too much, nor yield to indolent tendencies. Strength comes from hardihood. Even invalids find restoration in physical severity and bodily toil. To rise betimes in the morning, to sleep on a hard bed, to eat plain food, to abstain from stimulants, to take robust, and even tiresome exercise, is the regimen often given to enfeebled constitutions, and even to aged men. Even the wealthy seek with eagerness the season when they can leave the haunts of luxury, and rough it, like tramps, in the woods. It is the part of wisdom, of reason, and religion, so to use our bodies that we may get out of them, for as long as possible, all the effective strength and activity that nature warrants, that providence assures, that duty calls for, and that the glory of God requires.

2. But not only do we need the subjection of the body to severe discipline; the like duty pertains to the mind. *It*, too, as well as the animal nature, needs the tonic of endurance; calls for the stringency of rule and government; requires the training and the tasking

which are essential to sanctity. It is not merely that the fools' eyes wander to the end of the earth; sad as it is that there are fools who give license to the eyes of the mind, and allow them to roam incontinently to every quarter of the globe. The evil of the matter is that people who are not fools, people of sense and understanding, set up a claim to independence in the domain of intellect, and declare that they are a law to themselves in all the habits of thought and intelligence. The idea that mind itself, mental activity, the range of thought in the spheres of acquaintance, that books, both the instruments and the agents of the thinking faculty, that these are, in any way, matters of responsibility, has never entered the thoughts of thousands. And as the fruit of such gross heresy, one sees everywhere in society, freedom to the very verge of license in the conversation of men and women; the handling, on the one hand, of the most delicate subjects with ignorant rudeness, or the flippant disposal of the most mysterious and awful themes, as though they were holiday pleasantries. So, too, in reading, one sees, on all sides, the same self-release from the sense of duty and responsibility. In the family, children are allowed to read what they please. The parents who would shriek, or go into convulsions if their girls should, by mistake, swallow Prussic acid, are utterly unconcerned when they see them reading, with eagerness, books which inflame the

youthful imagination, and which serve to fasten the most damning principles upon the soiled surface of their souls. Youth, and young men, too, who hate the reading which tasks the mind, which demands attention, which sends the soul peremptorily to sound the inward oracles of reason or of faith, run with eagerness after the trashy literature of the day, which gives unthinking pleasure, and which is alien to every idea of truth and virtue.

Worse than all, not few are the numbers who secretly dabble in the dirty waters of impure literature, and corrupt the very fibres of their inward nature by the reading which comes from the devil, and which bears the imprint of damnation.

Now it seems the most evident of all things that we are responsible for our thoughts and for our habits of thinking. Our minds, in their several faculties, just the same as our bodies and limbs, are our instruments. As our own instruments, they are under our control and direction. In the centre is the will—king, ruler, guide. The thoughts of the soul are the generators of all action. As the thoughts of a man, so is his life. "As a man thinketh, so is he." If the master tendency of the mind is toward evil, then the "thoughts of the wicked are abomination." If they tend, in a man, to the excellent, then the "thoughts of the righteous are right."

It is a matter, then, of the greatest concern, for men to secure rectitude in the intellectual provinces of their being; for everything depends upon right thinking. If they seek ease in this section of their being, if they would fain avoid care and burdensome duty, if they choose to have only the things pleasant and delightful, if they would fain avoid what brings trial, toil, and perseverance, then most surely all tone and vigor will pass away from their mental faculties; they will become dwarfed and imbecile in the next grandest element of their being.

Hence, as an effort toward that mental endurance which I maintain is an obligation, it is our duty, first of all, to aim after the regulation of the intellect. By this I mean that we should bring our minds under such rules and laws of discipline as that we may have our minds and all their faculties under our control. You say, perchance, that this is the business which belongs to scholars; business people cannot attend to intellectual discipline. But I beg to say that if you cannot have your wits at your own command, if you do not train yourselves to interior rules of order, then you cannot do the work of life. In this, my brethren, resides all the success of life. Your successful and effective people, whether farmers, or laborers, or merchants, or mechanics, or sailors, as well as scholars, are the men who have their powers at command. Says the Apostle St.

James, "Behold we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm whithersoever the governor listeth." In precisely like manner every man should endeavor to put his personal self in the centre of all his powers and faculties, and regulate and dispose of them as he wills.

One great difficulty with most men is that they are possessed by their powers. Thus some men are mastered by prodigious memories; but they have no judgment, and ply no reasoning faculty. Then there are others who are carried away by a vivid and inflamed imagination. Another class are hard and iron thinkers, but there is no illumination of fancy, no treasure-house of golden memories.

The vice of disproportion and excess is always a great hindrance to self-command. When men are controlled by any one or several master faculties, then they come into a species of slavery to themselves, and lose the freedom of their wills just as much as when they are mastered by some special vice. The true remedy is to so train and regulate ourselves by proper habits, that we can use our mental capacities when we want them, and as we will. And this, in a degree, is in the power of all men; for as an actual fact we see this steady,

constant mind in men of all classes. We see sailors, soldiers, shoemakers, and carpenters, men in all callings, in perfect self-possession, who know their own powers, know how and when to use them, and who turn themselves, with full command, any way they wish with self-assurance and telling effect.

Besides the subjection of the intellect to rule and control, our next aim to the attainment of its strength is the use of the mental powers for the glory of Christ. It is with the intellect as with the bodily powers—by tasks you bring out its force and energy, by toil it gets hardihood and endurance. So, too, the intellect. Give it the nobler duties, and it, too, by every effort, gains to itself unusual and extraordinary might. And nothing in the range of the sciences, nothing in the circle of philosophy and letters, gives scope for the exercise of man's noblest powers as the religion of Christ. Hence it is that Lord Bacon declares that "theology is the prince of all the sciences": transcendent, that is in bringing out the forces of our mental manhood, and unequalled in the reflex influence which they give back to the soul as the fruit and reward of diligent spiritual study.

Now the special requirement, in this regard, is first a *negative* one, and that is that we guard intelligently the entrance of any intellectual poison into our minds. Do not tamper with scepticism. There is a wisdom

that, in our day, affects to hold that all true greatness calls for the intellect to deny God, the word of God, and the grand attributes of God. This wisdom, so-called, but which after all is nothing but folly, would tell us that religion is a weak and fond thing, only fitted for women and children. But then remember that the weak and simple ones who adored Christ, revered His holy name, and who held Him precious to their souls, are, with millions of others, such historical and learned persons as Hannah More, Sarah Coleridge, Catherine Herschel, Mrs. Browning, and Florence Nightingale. And the *other* weak ones who have worshipped the Christ were Augustine, and Jerome, and Gregory; and in modern times Newton, Barrow, and Pascal, Cudsworth and Butler, Edwards and Faraday, and Coleridge and Bushnell. A fine lot of simpletons, of both sexes, who gave way to superstition, and evidenced the shallowest brains! And if you will listen to the wise people of our day you will get the notion that to be intellectually great you must trample upon the faith of these grand persons, and take to your hearts the aid and unbelief of infidels and atheists.

Do not tamper with scepticism. It takes away sense, morality, and strength of mental being, and can only serve to bring weakness and imbecility to the intellectual powers.

Add to this the other grand accessory of power in

the domain of intellect ; that is, to lay hold of the great truths and noble ideas of the Christian Faith. Nothing will sooner and more directly give you strength than the grappling with lofty truth and majestic principles. Go to the fountain head. Reach up to the primary, fundamental ideas of the Christian system. Take these ideas, turn them over, look into them, study them, and try to master them. The effort will indeed try and puzzle your best brains ; but you will surely come out of the trial strong and robust men. Old Jacob, weak, tricky man as he was, when he met the mysterious man at the ford of Jabbok, grappled with him, mighty as he was, and prevailed. He came out of the tussle, it is true, with a disabled thigh ; but he got power from it, and was ever after called Israel, "for as a prince he had power with God and prevailed." So, too, your intellects shall gain majestic strength by familiarity with the noble truths of the religion of Jesus. Seize, then, upon the vital principles of the Christian Faith, in all the ways and modes it can be brought home to you. Make companions of the great Christian thinkers. Stick to the great Christian books. Above all, familiarize yourselves with the deep reasonings and the exhaustive discussions of St. Paul ; and, in the private regions of the mind, store up texts and paragraphs and chapters of the revealed Word, until by such a regimen your weak nature attains tone, strength, and masculine power.

“Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

3. We have been considering the duty and the need of discipline and hardihood in the two distinct sections of our being, that is, the body and the mind. One other higher domain of our nature calls for notice, and that is the soul or spiritual being of man. It is difficult to make, in express terms, a distinction between the mind and the spirit. A very clever work appeared not long ago, in England, which maintained the doctrine of “The Tri-partite Nature of Man;” that is, that man is a being with three different elements in his nature, viz., body, mind, and then a third essence called spirit. There are two or three passages in the New Testament which, on the surface, seem to warrant this opinion. One already referred to is 1 Thes., v, 23, and another is Heb., iv, 12. But I apprehend that the true doctrine both of mental science and of the Bible is that man’s immaterial nature is a unit, and that soul and spirit in Scripture only refer to two distinct departments of the inward nature; one which we commonly speak of as intellect, and the other more especially the image of God, the soul or spirit.

This soul or spirit is, as all the other sections of our being, impaired by the Fall, and needs the discipline which trains to divine rectitude. The soul, as well as the body, and just as the intellect, must needs endure hardness. It cannot thrive by indulgence. It cannot reach

to sanctity by being pampered. On the other hand it must be brought under the subjection of rule, laid under the burden of tasks, pass the ordeal of endurance. Hence we read the commands of our blessed Lord to the duties of humility and meekness, to lowly-mindedness and peace, to fasting and prayer, to forbearance and submission. Read the Sermon on the Mount, and observe how our Lord inculcates the precepts and the practices which serve to chasten the spirit into patience, endurance, and calm submission to man; yea, to the evil, as well as to God. Read the inspired Epistles, and see how St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul, in the spirit of their master, enjoined the habits which bring the soul into austerity and strict obedience. Turn to the beautiful pictures and the grand panorama of the book of the Revelation, and see how conspicuously there, tribulation is brought before us in the conflicts and the triumphs of the saints; is set before us, as the heritage of the blessed, in all their inner spiritual experience, as well as in outward circumstance. Indeed, brethren, to use the words of another, "All regulation is limitation, and regulation is only another name for reassured existence." All our life, even our spiritual life, is only a series of limitations, to the end, as St. Paul puts it, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

The duty and the need of endurance unto hardness, in the three different portions or divisions of your one grand nature, have thus been brought to your notice. Two or three suggestions which may serve to fasten the train of thought that has been presented, and lead to some deep insight into the realities of life, in conclusion may be added.

1st. Remember that life is no toy, no jest, no dance, not a thing of mere revelry. Everywhere life—that is, in rational spiritual beings—is a grand, downright, and active service. We begin with God Himself; and of Him, that august and awful Being Who fills all things, Who presides over all creatures, and decides all destinies, of Him we have that most singular and mysterious utterance of His blessed Son our Saviour—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." It is but a glimpse, indeed, into the secrets of awful Deity, but it is sufficient to show us the ever-weaving active spring of that infinite mind which stretches out invisible hands to every quarter of illimitable space, and touches all things and all beings, and by that touch imparts that "active principle" which moves the universe. Yes! God is the greatest worker in the universe; carrying on multitudinous operations, in matter and in spirit, through Jesus Christ the eternal Son, by the agency of the Holy Spirit—here on earth, and amid the hierarchies of highest heavens. And all

these works are deep, noble, majestic, awful, as is God Himself. Nothing of levity is, in any way, associated with them. God's work, everywhere, even in nature, to say nought of the spirit world, is sacred, earnest, absolute, beautiful and glorious though it be.

2d. With this may be joined the other reflection that the final end of all God's work, whether that work is by Himself, or through the energies of His creatures, the final end is God's own glory. The work of the universe terminates in that special point, and was designed to culminate in that grand consummation. And so indeed it will. Even the wrath of men shall praise Him. But what a corrective is this grand truth, to the selfish regards which lead men to set up their own personal good as the main object of existence!

O, happiness, our being's end and aim,

the exclamation of a great poet, is the creed of the Epicurean and the Bacchanal. Not so! Happiness is *not* the terminal point of our being. The end of our existence is a something out of and beyond ourselves. It is a grand fact which reaches over to another and a higher nature than our own. It is a reality in which is involved a struggle and fight to rise beyond self to a somewhat infinite and ineffable, beyond the skies. In this resides the obligation of work and high endeavor. There is an infinite goal to reach, a high mark for the soul to attain unto. And herein is no place for

levity or foolish pastime. We were baptized to be soldiers. The call of soldiers is to endurance and hardness in the camp and on the battle-field. And with this idea, as the central point of the morning's teaching, I can do nothing better for you and for myself than to repeat the trumpet-call of the day's Epistle—"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

SERMON XIV.

JOSEPH.

The Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

GEN. XLIX: 22, 23, 24.

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.

I apprehend that you have all learned, long ago, how cheap a thing virtue is held to be in this world. Instead of being regarded as the most precious of all things, more weighty and valuable than gold, brighter and more brilliant than diamonds; the most of men pass her by as a thing of but little worth, amid the business and policies of life and society. If you go to the marts of traffic, or enter the circles of politics, you will find a most thorough appreciation of tact, of skill, of pluck, of diligence, and of money: but how rare a thing is it to hear a merchant, or a trader, or a politician, extol the priceless value of virtue. The most, in general, you can get, is the cold proverb—"Honesty is the best policy"; and even then the praise is given to the policy; men are mindless of the principle. Go into the

cabins of the poor, and what are the complaints one oft-times hears? In nine times out of ten, men will tell you—"I have tried to live uprightly; I pay all my honest debts; I am as poor as a beggar. And yet see that man there, driving his coach, and living in a palace! He never paid his debts. He robbed the bank; he cheated widows and orphans, and yet everybody respects him for his money. What's the use of being honest?" So, too, women tell you—"I have always lived a pure life. There is not a stain upon my reputation;—but nobody cares for poor girls like us! But your fast women! your brazen-faced women! they carry every thing before them! *They* get the best prizes! They have jewels and dresses and fine living! What's the use of living chaste and virtuous?"

Now there is nothing new in all this; it is the complaint of ages! Centuries ago, men and women rose up in society, with the same distrust of God, and of His providence. Go back to the book of Job. It is not a book, turned out of the press, a day or two ago. It is, without doubt, the oldest book in the world. See what he tells us of the doubters of his day: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us;

for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" And so, too, we find precisely the same utterance in Malachi—"Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. . . . Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?"

And thus you see that this doubt of the value of virtue is no new thing. It comes down some thousands of years, from the lips of croakers, to our day. But I beg to say that, old and long-standing as it is, it is utterly false!

I. One of the chief values of the Scripture is its endeavor to illustrate the abiding excellence of the principle of virtue. Observe that the devil opens one book to the sight of men, to illustrate the worthlessness of virtue. That book is the mere outward show of things: but it is a fair book, attractive and deceiving to the outward sight. And most men are persuaded by it; for "seeing," they say (if only with half an eye), "is believing." But God opens another book, which requires a sight below the surface; which tells us a different tale; which assures us that virtue is a real, an abiding, a divine, and an everlasting thing. And doubtless this is one of the main reasons why we have the lives of the

Saints set before us in Scripture ; that the actual experience of the holy men of old, through fiery trials and almost deathly experience, may illustrate this grand fact ; serve also to show the damning lies of the devil ; and so strengthen our souls, in the things which are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and of good report. This is the special period of the Christian Year that these superior persons are brought before us. We began, on the first Sunday after Trinity, with Noah ; and now from hence to Advent, all these great personages pass in grand procession, as in a panorama, before our eyes ; the grandest illustrations of excellence the world has ever seen : Moses, Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, Isaiah and Ezekiel, Daniel, John the Baptist, holy Stephen, St. Paul, and St. John the Divine.

To-day, as the last and the following Sunday, we have the chaste and beauteous life of Joseph set before us. I shall be glad, for a few moments, to have you join me in observing the light which Joseph's life and character shed on this question of the force and value of virtue.

I. Let me, in the briefest manner, tell the story of Joseph's life. He was, as you well know, the youngest, save Benjamin, of the twelve sons of Jacob. His early, I may say, his precocious wisdom, prudence, and piety, contrasted with the recklessness of his older brothers, made him at an early age, not merely the delight, but rather the friend, the confidante, and favorite of his

father. This partiality begat a feeling of hate and envy against him, in the family ; the result of which was the memorable conspiracy to either kill, or get rid of him in some other summary manner. He was sold by his brethren to Midianite merchantmen for twenty pieces of silver ; and then his brethren represented to their father that he had been devoured by an evil beast. The Midianites took Joseph into Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, a high military officer in the court of Pharaoh.

It is evident that the superiority of Joseph was intrinsic. It was in him. It was an elemental quality. For now, although a slave, a foreigner, in a strange land, he shoots up instantly, as in his father's house, into immediate eminence. He becomes at once the overseer of his master's house ; and through his skill, prudence, and management, brings blessing and prosperity to his master's household.

But Joseph, like every other man, had to acknowledge the existence of evil in a world like this. That dark coarse thread seemed, from the start, to have been thoroughly intermingled with all the warp and woof of his chequered life.

In the midst of great success and preferment, a most calamitous providence overtook him : his mistress, a wanton and shameless woman, assails his virtue ; and being repulsed by this upright and honorable youth, it curdles her violent and diseased love into deadly and

malignant hate. She turns upon him with the venom and violence of a serpent. She takes up a murderous lie and casts it in his face, charging him to her husband with an attempt upon her virtue! Down at once again goes Joseph to infamy and punishment! He is thrown into prison. He is made the companion of thieves and reprobates. The earth under him was as iron, and the heavens above as brass.

But "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down." Even here, in this most unfortunate position, his light could not be hid. First of all, the Lord opened the eyes of the prison-keeper to Joseph's worth and excellence, and gave him a post in the prison of authority and management. And, second, by the providential interpretation of the dreams of the butler and the baker, Joseph is brought to the notice of Pharaoh. For he too has most remarkable dreams; and there is no magician in his court able to interpret them. Then it was that the chief butler remembered his friend Joseph, introduced him to the king, gave him the opportunity of interpretation, and so, as you have all read, over and over again, Joseph becomes the providential saviour of the land of Egypt. And thus the poor captive and prisoner passes out of his prison and mounts at one step, to the noble position of prime minister of the grandest empire of all antiquity.

Now let us note just here the chief marks and characteristics of this brief biography. What are its strong, its deep, living features and peculiarities? Here is a youth, who begins life with most decided moral convictions, with high spiritual purposes. These very tendencies bring him, at the start, into conflict and disaster. The adversaries of uprightness strike him at once, and down he goes—not once, nor twice, but many times—beneath the deadly blows of hate, falsehood, and jealousy. But observe, it makes no change nor alteration in his principles and purposes. He is as true as the needle to the pole. He stands like a beaten anvil. On he goes, in the predetermined pathway of purity and virtue; and gradually he emerges, unstained, with full pristine power, from all his trials and misfortunes, to triumph and to honor.

How shall we account for this phenomenon? There are people who will tell you that life in all its respects is but a lottery. Everything, they say, comes and goes by chance. They laugh at the idea that principle or truth have anything to do with the fortunes of men. There are no determinate forces in life, is their creed. Point them to the careers of Joseph, or Moses, or Daniel, and they affirm at once—"It was all a matter of luck!"

I venture to oppose such a theory as this, with all the powers of my soul. I maintain, most decidedly, that

there is no such thing as haphazard; no possibility of chance in the moral government of this world. All things stand related, in their order, as fact and sequence. The principle of antecedency maintains as thoroughly in character, in individual, personal fortune, as in the flowing of streams from their sources. Just the same as in nature, we look spontaneously for fit causes; so, too, when we behold moral purity and success, we may, if we choose, trace out clearly and distinctly the linked chain of moral events which brought them on, through Providence, from darkness into light. I say, therefore, that Joseph's successful career, despite his trials and difficulties, was not a matter of chance. It did not come forth out of the dust; it did not spring up out of the ground. It was the fruit which sprouted forth from a tree "whose seed was in itself, after his kind." It was the true, the genuine, the sterling offspring of distinct moral principles.

Virtue, then, I maintain, is a vital, productive element in life and character; it is a grand germinant root; it is a great mine, full of richest ore; it is a vast, deep-laid foundation, fitted for the noblest structures. Let us see, to-day, what bearing the life of Joseph has upon these broad assertions.

Observe, first of all, the roots of Joseph's mature character, of his life's grand consummation. He began, first of all, with a pious and reverent boyhood.

And character—believe me, just like a grand house, just like a majestic cathedral, just like the magnificent Capitol which crowns this beautiful city—character, I say, is built upon solid foundations. The beginning of manhood is childhood and youth. If the boyhood is tainted and rotten, if the girlhood is base and trifling, whence comes the probability that the manhood will be strong and noble, the womanhood beautiful, blooming, and odorous? Character is no sudden and extemporaneous affair. It does not spring up in a night like a gourd, to full maturity. There is nothing that is strong, stable, and lasting, that comes up suddenly to rapid growth. All the abiding things of the universe are slow in the processes of their begetting and development. It is so in the natural world. It is precisely so in the spiritual. The natural is the sign and symbol of the spiritual; for all things go by doubles in God's system. And nature teaches us in all things; in earth, sea, and air; in the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal world; that all the things which stay and endure, with a tough and immutable vitality, are such as pass through those tardy and gradual evolutions, which rise by graduation, through definite stages, and are brought at length to full maturity.

Even so it is with character. Nothing in the world is more cumulative in its nature. It is the aggregation of multitudinous moral atoms—thoughts, feelings, trials,

attempts, prayers, wishes, struggles, resolves, wills, and determinations; commencing in lisping infancy; developed in boyhood and girlhood; bursting forth into fuller growth in early manhood and womanhood; matured in manhood and womanhood; strengthened and toughened into hardihood in age—it is all this which makes character. A lengthy process, is it not? But notice, the antecedents cannot be left out. There must be the early tendrils and sproutings. Look around in all this beautiful, leafy summer; what full, sweet-scented rose have any of you seen, which did not have, first of all, its shoot and bud, before it burst forth into all its affluence of leaf and form and color and exquisite beauty? So, too,

The child is father of the man.

If it is a bad child is not the danger great that the manhood will be bad likewise? If, however, the childhood be good, all men accept the token of something fair, bright, and beautiful in maturity: as sang the poet, going out at early dawn, and finding air, earth, and sky bright, glorious, and fresh:

This morning gives us promise of a glorious day.

Eminently was this the case with Joseph. All his beginnings were pure and clear. All of his brothers, save Benjamin, manifest a downright proclivity for the bad! Look at their perverse and crooked lives!

“Full of all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness! full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity! without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful!” Remember how they treated Joseph; how they deceived their father; how they lied; committed incest, and murdered the Shechemites!

Now look on this other picture. Behold the fair and beauteous youth of Joseph. Reverent, obedient, loving, trustworthy from early boyhood. Now here I say are some of the foundation-stones of that grand superstructure of character and success which Joseph's life discloses. This, I say, is a thing of no chance-happening. It is a result proceeding from its proper cause. It is the fruit, the growth of its legitimate seed. It is a pure and noble stream, flowing from its grand, lofty, and pellucid mountain source.

And hence I exhort you,—let no man deceive you with vain words. You will find plenty of people who will strive to deceive you; numbers who will endeavor to beguile you with sophistry and so-called philosophy. You will find men who will try to persuade you that there is no distinction in morals. You will find old men, gray in grossness and iniquity, who will tell you that there is “no harm in sowing a few wild oats.” It may, it is true, take a few blind and innocent girls out of their homes and turn them into harlots; it may send a dozen weak and feeble young men, through gambling

and whiskey and fornication, to swift destruction. But after all "no one is the worse for sowing a few wild oats!" Let no man deceive you with vain words! They are liars, every one of them; and the devil is their father!

And you who are women—young women—you, too, have your temptations and your tempters. Both will try to convince you that there is no sense in the words right and wrong; that success in life is all a matter of luck; that the devil is as strong as God, in this world; that craft and trick and cunning yield a greater, swifter success than all the modesty and circumspection of life; that it is your artful, delusive, and meretricious women, your Jezebels and Herodiascs of old, your Becky Sharps of modern days—who make the greatest conquests and have the finest times! God have mercy upon every one of you, if you can possibly be brought to believe such gross falsehood! All history, the world over, disproves it. If not, why have we on the page of Scripture the names of Rebecca and Ruth, of Hannah and Esther, of Anna and Elizabeth, and far above them all, the blessed virgin Mary? Yes, you have in Scripture your glorious and illustrious sisters, as we men our pure and unstained brothers. Why, I ask again, if virtue and piety are nothing worth, why do the names of Lucretia and Cornelia shine so resplendently in history? The names of Jennie Deans and Rebecca and Dinah gleam so brilliantly in fiction?

Yes, it is most thoroughly true—the grandest realities in the universe are truth and excellence and moral beauty.

The only amaranthine flower is beauty,

The only lasting treasure Truth.

And this brings me to the second of the causes of Joseph's eminence and his success. It was his personal purity. What man is there here who has not heard brutal, putrid creatures, who called themselves men, sneer at the purity of Joseph? Now it is because of just this insensibility, this lack of delicacy, that lewdness serves to hedge up the ways of men, and to bring them into deep and sad disaster. It is of all things a most mischievous and disturbing element. It is the antagonism of all regularity of habit. It cuts off the heads of men; that is, it beclouds the intellect, and robs men of all clearness of vision. Saddest of all things, it corrodes the sensibilities, blunts the affections, and hardens the heart!

Perhaps no man ever lived who, both from observation and bitter experience, was better fitted to testify upon this subject than the poet Burns. He had trod all the avenues of license; he had supped at every cup of delight; he had drunk the deepest draughts of sensuous intoxication. But what says Burns?

I waive the quantum of the sin,

The hazard of concealing;

But Oh! it hardens all within,

And petrifies the feeling.

The example of Joseph is just the reverse of this. Nothing is more remarkable in his course than straightforwardness, simplicity, and integrity. And these, I contend, are fruits of personal purity. Just listen to this exclamation: "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God!" Here you see, as a flash, that uprightness of brain and heart which makes a man! There is no parleying with temptation. There is no tardy hesitancy about duty. He is at once himself, self-possessed, positive, showing forth the conspicuous moral and mental qualities which are demanded in many of the exigencies of life.

Thus when we turn to the occasion where he interprets the dream of Pharaoh, you observe the same address and readiness. So clear are both his mental and moral vision, that in a moment he forecasts all the difficulties of a seven years' famine, and in the simplest manner sets before the king the policy of an empire.

Believe me, the head and the heart go together. Just in proportion as the moral nature is kept pure and elevated, so will the intellect have tone and clearness. A man's spiritual integrity serves to put him in full command of all his other powers. Indeed, it is a remark of Coleridge that it is from the moral nature the intellect gets its power and full nourishment. Rarely in history have we so signal an instance of this truth as in the case of Joseph. Here we find a man full of governing

power; making the completest policies of a kingdom; laying out the broadest plans; carrying out the grandest schemes of a whole nation; breasting with ease the supremest necessities; and yet always equal to the occasion and equal to himself. And the secret of it was that blending of the intellect with a high spiritual nature, and deep moral convictions.

I refer to one further element in Joseph's success and superiority. God was the great factor in all this glorious life. He it was who, by secret, silent, but most powerful influences, stimulated this noble youth in all the ways of youthful piety and purity. He is the fountain of all our goodness. Virtue is a golden thing. Virtue is a precious, priceless jewel. Virtue is a brilliant diamond; but virtue is based upon God, and is a divine characteristic. The virtue of Joseph was the fruit of that patriarchal piety which produced the faith of Abraham, the quiet saintliness of Isaac, and the spiritual apprehension of Jacob. In Joseph it burst forth into a spotless integrity which is only equalled by the holy firmness of Daniel, and the saintliness of St. John. You will observe, however, that this crystal purity is no mere worldly prudence, no calculating morality. It is the direct outgrowth of the religious sentiment. It is the fruit of that fear and love of God which characterized all the ancient saints. And this it was, God in him, God always set before him, God in all things, which made

Joseph the great man he was. Everywhere, in this most interesting narrative, this great fact discovers itself. Sold into bondage, he at once secures favor, for we are told, "The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man." Cast into prison, he at once got favor; for again we are told "The Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." Brought by a singular providence before Pharaoh, to interpret his dreams, his whole being, mind, and spirit, is illuminated with divine light; and he is enabled to scatter the darkness of a doubtful and disastrous epoch, and to penetrate it with order, safety, and blessedness.

And so I say to you, my brethren, all true virtue is evangelical; it comes from God; and wherever it lodges, in a soul or in a nation, it gives strength and mastery. And this is just as much an assurance to-day as it was in Joseph's time, three thousand years ago. If we only cast ourselves, simply and entirely, upon God, He will surely discover Himself to us, as our covenant God; and in His strength we shall be enabled to rise above ourselves and all the lowly tendencies of our nature. He will enable us to go from one degree of excellence to another; gradually all our dross shall depart; we shall reach, even in the flesh, to angelic desires; and at last saintship shall become a lasting acquisition.

I conclude with the briefest exhortation: As Christian

men, root your piety in the purest righteousness, color it with the most rigid morality. When you hear people say that they "don't want any of your morality, all they want is religion," scout such senseless stuff, as you would throw decayed fruit out of your windows. Marry the simplest faith in Jesus to the most thorough observance of the Ten Commandments. Strive after the strictest honesty. Take no liberties with any one. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth." Make it the rule of your life, for men, to be modest as women, for women, to be simple as children. There is no danger, for any one of us, of mere legality, if we remember always John Baptist's exhortation, to "Behold the Lamb of God"; and with Him ever in view as "our wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," the Law can never be anything more to us than a rule of life. And with God's abiding grace within us, that rule will strip us of all selfishness; it will raise us above all grossness; it will help to uplift us to all sanctity of body and soul; and so shall we reach obedience to the command: "Be ye holy as I am holy." Forget not then to show all good fidelity; to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Remember it is the exhortation of an inspired Apostle, and the example of the life of Joseph—"Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue!"

SERMON XV.

INFLUENCE.

The sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

JUDGES IV : 8.

And Barak said unto her, "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go ; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go."

Nothing is more common in the world than man's eagerness for power, and his pride in the possession of it. It is a sad reflection, however, that a sense of the responsibility which comes with power is the rarest of things. Men care but little for the duties which spring from authority ; they are almost thoughtless of the responsibility which is allied to their influence.

Look at the master minds who have fought their way to thrones and dominion ; and see their after indifference to the welfare of those subjected to them ! How rare the instances where honor or fame has been sought for, and then used for the good of man ! How few the noble characters who cared for the interests of society, who were anxious for the well-being of their fellow-creatures.

And yet, to live for man, to do good to man, is one

of the grandest objects of our existence. And perhaps there is hardly anything which is so offensive to God as that selfish mode of living, alas too common in this world, which says, sometimes in brazen words, sometimes in pretentious but vulgar conduct, "What is the world to me? I want nothing of it; I can take care of myself; let the world take care of itself; I want nothing to do with it." But smart as all this *sounds*, it is false and hollow. There is no sense or reality in it. For never, in all the world's history, has there been a man who, independent of man, was able to take care of himself. Nor, on the other hand, has there ever been so lowly, so insignificant a human being, who did not, in some way, affect society in some of its dearest interests.

The truth is, every human being has influence; which is a part of himself, and helps to make up his personal being. And as long as he lives it goes out from him to others, for weal or for woe. Nay, more; it is not limited to time. Once having lived, it never dies. For the individual may go down to the tomb and perish; but the propelling wave of his influence has started, and never again shall it cease in its power; but it shall go on evermore, touching many a shore, and lifting up or dashing down many an immortal craft journeying onward to eternity.

These suggestions have occurred to me, on consider-

ing the words of the text, and which show, in a remarkable manner, the power held by one human being over another. The occasion was as follows :

The children of Israel were grievously oppressed by Jabin, King of Canaan. The Israelites, at this time, were governed by Deborah, a prophetess ; and the command of God came to her, that she should take three thousand men to meet in deadly combat Sisera, the Captain of Jabin's army, and thus throw off the yoke of the Canaanites. To this end she goes to Barak, an eminent warrior, and commands him—"Go and draw toward Mt. Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the tribe of Naphthali and Zebulun ; and I," she says, "will draw unto thee to the river Kishon, Sisera, the Captain of Jabin's army. . . . And I will deliver him unto thine hand." Barak was evidently a man who, however valiant, could not act without a leader. In order to achieve anything, he must rest upon some other arm than his own. Hence a consideration of his case will enable us to understand the nature and the responsibility of that influence which we all exercise in the relations of life.

I. In speaking upon this subject, I remark, first of all, that we are accountable for our influence. I do not pause to prove that we *have* influence ; it is as certain as that we live. And for it we are held accountable by God, and are responsible to man. This is

evident from the very nature of influence. What is it? It is power; the power of one will over another. This power and authority go forth from us to others in various ways. In speech, by action, by the glance of the eye, by the expression of feeling, by the show of passion, by the play of the countenance, by the motion of the hand, by our dress, our habits, our style of living, and our conduct. These are a few of the numerous ways by which we influence the minds of men, and prompt their lives. And now I ask—if I cause a man to do an act, am I not responsible, *i. e.*, so far forth as I lead him to do it? Of course I am not to bear the entire burden of his conduct, for he is a man as well as I, and he is bound to think and judge for himself. But if I am the stronger, more controlling character, and use my influence to guide him astray, and start him on his way to ruin, surely I am responsible for what I do.

We see this more clearly in some of the prime relations of life. We feel, for instance, that if a parent should purposely cripple a child's leg, or maim its body, the civil authority should be invoked to put a stop to such gross cruelty. For any one can see that both father and mother are responsible for both the bodily members and the physical growth of their children. So, too, with respect to the mind. Suppose, for instance, that some English or German settlers in

Texas should refuse to have their children educated in the common schools, but deliberately choose that they should learn the savagery and paganism of the heathen Indians; would not the civil authority in that State at once interfere, take those children from their parents, and have them brought up under the influences of culture and civilization? And the basis of such interference would be that the parents were responsible for the character of their children; but having proved false to their responsibility, the State took the place of the parents, and rescued them from ruin.

So in the marriage relation this mutual responsibility discovers itself; and St. Paul brings it out in the case where one of the parties might be a Christian, and the other a heathen: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband; or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

Now here is the principle, that we are responsible for our influence. But it is manifest that this principle is not one that is local, partial, or limited. It is a broad, general, universal principle; pertaining to souls under all circumstances. And see how it reaches our fellow-creatures on every side, with awful significance and tremendous power.

I am responsible for my influence; I am held accountable by the Almighty for the way in which I affect and prompt the souls of my fellow-men. Then I

am responsible for my influence upon you. Then you are responsible for your influence upon me ; and each and every one of us is responsible for the influence we exert upon our neighbors. Then we are responsible for the *channels* by which our influence goes forth from us to others. Then, and you cannot resist the inference, we are responsible for the very looks we have ; for the conduct we exhibit ; for the passions we manifest ; for the habits we have contracted ; for the style of living we have formed ; for the mode of dress we have adopted ; for the words and utterances of our speech. For these are the channels of influence ; the modes whereby we touch the minds of others, and bend them to our ways and will. They are the streams of all the strong power we possess, by which that power goes forth from us, and is made to bear, with decided effect, upon the being of our fellow-creatures.

And we are responsible for their outflowings ; and though the influence of a man differs somewhat, in kind, from his specific acts, yet the law of divine justice comes in here, with the same force and authority as in any outward deed. Influence, though invisible, is still a man's doings ; my influence is, in fact, my act. It is what I do, effect, or work out, in and through my fellow creatures. And for all I do, whether outward or inward acts, I must render my account. For all my influence, conscious or unconscious, I have got to stand at the

bar of Judgment. And there God is the Judge. And when my time, or your time comes, you and I, and all of us, will hear that question which fell of old upon the ears of the first-born son of man: "What hast thou done?" Or that other that came before it: "Where is thy brother?" And, Oh, good Lord, save us, even now, we beseech Thee, from the spirit of Cain! May we not, ungodly, think or say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" But grant, through grace, that we may all of us perceive the binding tie of humanity, and feel that we are the servants of our fellow men, and bound to live for their well-being and their blessedness.

2. I go on now to speak of the measure of our responsibility for our influence. Our accountability, it is evident, is proportioned to our influence. Herein lies our stewardship. We are stewards of God in the particular item of influence. That stewardship is a light or weighty one, according as we have power, the more or less, to direct or control the souls of men.

A little girl is beloved by her schoolmate; and so great power has she over her, that that schoolmate will do anything she wants her to do, good or bad. She is responsible for her control over that child's soul, and to God. They are both responsible for the power they possess, the one over the other. A poor widow in a little town is idolized by her children, and they believe everything she says, and will do whatever she bids

them ; for nobody, in their opinion, is comparable with their mother. She holds the souls of those little ones in her hands, and God will call her to account for their character and conduct. Here is a man in a community, of such commanding power, whether through wealth, talent, or character, that everybody quotes him as authority, and aims to follow in his track. As sure as God liveth, He will hold him responsible for his popularity and his power. There is a woman of culture and refinement, whose word, style, and manner are admired and copied by all the women, both young and old, in her neighborhood. God holds her accountable for the full measure of her influence.

Now the measure of responsibility, in these cases, is in proportion to the degree of influence. The little school-girl does not bear the same burden as the popular citizen ; for one may touch but one soul, while the other may guide and control thousands. Neither is the humble widow among her children as responsible as the accomplished and fashionable lady, whose position and style stir and flutter a whole community. So, likewise, a quiet, private gentleman is not held as accountable as the great man who towers above everybody in the State, and sways the opinions, sentiments, and destiny of a Nation. But you will notice that *all* are responsible ; the one who inspires but one or two souls, as well as the one that quickens and inflames the minds of millions.

But there is this difference ; that he or she who moulds or stimulates the lives of thousands rests under a more awful burden than he who only acts upon two or three persons. How clearly is this principle brought out in Scripture ; especially in that most solemn portion of it, the parable of the talents, to which your attention was called two Sundays ago. The lord of the vineyard called them *all* to account ; but the burden of responsibility fell more heavily upon him who had received five talents, than upon him who had received *two*, or him that had received *one*. For the responsibility of *five* talents was more than twice as great as two ; and consequently he who had received five talents had to bring five talents more ; his responsibility being double and more than the servant who received two talents, and five times as great as he who had received but one. And thus you see that we are responsible in proportion to the amount of our talents or influence.

You will notice, however, that the man who received *one* talent did not escape scrutiny because his talent or influence was small. The lord called him to account for his *one* ; that is, for just the measure of responsibility the lord had put upon him ; no more, no less. And note here the fact that the wicked and slothful servant could not evade this responsibility. He tried to evade it ; he buried his talent in the ground ; he pre-

tended to be frightened at the great weight of his responsibility; he affected to restore back to his master the talent that he had given him; nay, he went so far as to cast the blame of his negligence upon the master himself; yea, even to apply hard and reproachful terms to him. But none of these shifts availed. When God gives a man a power of usefulness it is impossible for that man to escape it. That burden remains; that responsibility endures! The servant with one talent could not get rid of it. It clung to him in the presence of his master. It clung to him in the outer darkness, whither the Angels of God cast him as a worthless branch!

And so it is with every one of us. You may have position, and then throw yourself back upon it. You may have learning, and may proudly withdraw yourself from the ignorant. You may have wealth, and may set yourself haughtily apart from the poor and wretched. But after all you are a man, and you have the influence of a man; and it is a gift from God, and you must answer for it! So has God ordered it that according to the measure of a man's influence, so is his responsibility, and for it he is required to render his account to God!

3. But I hasten on to remark, that influence is an awful, a perilous thing when it assumes the form and proportions of mastery and control. And this is often the case. The mass of men, the world over, are gov-

erned by opinion and example. Imitation, too, is a most powerful agent in deciding the convictions and habits of men. No doubt it is God's will that certain prominent men should have authoritative influence; *that* is their calling; to that they are elected by the Almighty Himself, to the end that they may help to quicken inferior wills, and to decide human destinies.

Thus in the family relation the words of a father or mother go with children to mature manhood; and may descend to children's children. How in our school-days our hearts have become knit "as with hooks of steel" to companions whom we have loved as Jonathan loved David, with a "love passing the love of women." I have myself seen men moving about through a nation, after whom millions of men flowed as with the mighty current of a torrent; and when they spoke, momentous questions were settled, as though decisive utterances had come forth from an oracle or a God.

How awful is the position of such men! How dreadful their responsibility, if they but think perversely; if they but speak lightly or at random; if their steps are crooked; if their ways are winding; if there is no straightforwardness or integrity in them! Alas! alas! how many are the poor souls who imitate their words and ways, and follow in their footsteps to destruction and to woe!

Aye, the poison of bad influence is persistent, is abid-

ing, is undying. So there is an immortality of evil as well as that of good. Do you think that the remembrance of the world's bad men has ever perished? Do you think that Napoleon's burning thirst for glory ceased in its influence when he was laid in his grave? No! Many an ardent youth has since been fired by the same ungodly desire; and careless of man, and regardless of God, has sighed and cried for like power and opportunity to wade through slaughter to renown and empire!

But the illustrations of this controlling influence of men is as common in the lowlier spheres of life as in the higher. Sometimes a grand, noble parent serves his generation and blesses it, and then sends down the crystal purity of his honor, and the odor of his sanctity to children's children. Sometimes it is the reverse, and the alcoholic blood and the alcoholic breath of a drunkard triumphs over the dominion of the grave, and reaches over a whole generation of men to his descendants, poisoning the atmosphere and polluting society by the sottishness of sons and grandsons. The fragrantcy of a holy ministry clings to the very pews, the roof, the pulpit of a church, for generations; a false prophet, a bigot, a heretic, retains, if I may so express it, "a savor of death," a vitality of rottenness, centuries after his bodily decay in the graveyard. And just so it is with a school-teacher; with a magistrate in a community; with

a superior woman in a neighborhood. In all these cases, if our manners, conduct, or opinions control; if our word is law; how awful is the responsibility! How perilous is our position! How continuous our sway! Indeed, there is no such thing as the extirpation of evil influence, any more than of good. The very carcasses of such wretches as Alcibiades, Byron, and Aaron Burr serve as manure to produce a further brood of reprobates for the ruin of society.

E'en in our ashes live our wonted fires!

Whether they be the Pentecostal fires lit up in our chaste bosoms by the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier; or whether they are the damning fires of lust, hate, or mad ambition, kindled in our souls by the inflammatory agency of the devil.

The text we are considering is one of the strongest instances of the importance and the power of influence. Barak put his soul upon Deborah's. He staked his duty upon her will. Lacking self-reliance, deficient in personal resolution, he placed himself under the dominion of her audacity, and resigned himself to the lead of her pluck and spiritedness. If she would go, then he would go; if she would not go, neither would he. This was an instance of human influence. The Prophetess was to decide his duty and his destiny. Happily she knew the will of God; knew well her own duty; was fully aware of the moral force she could bring to bear

upon Barak. But suppose she had been blind to these things? What then? You say, perchance, God would have raised up some other deliverer for Israel, or wrought some mighty miracle. But how do you know this? Indeed, you do not know it. Deborah was God's own chosen agent, for the hour; and failure on her part, at this critical juncture, would have brought confusion and ruin upon thousands, and possibly the serious injury of God's chosen people.

Ah, brethren, that fearful "If thou wilt"! How many weak souls have been led to recklessness and audacity by the thoughtless challenge, "If you will do so, I will too." How many an "If thou wilt" has brought weak-minded youth to drunkenness! How many vain and foolish girls to extravagance, and then to moral pollution, and to death! Indeed, it is a most fearful thing to have friends and kinsfolk who are governed by mere desire, and not by conscience; who never think of moral obligation; and whose entire influence upon their weaker companions is a lure to excess and riot, an enticement to dissipation and wantonness, a precipitation into profligacy and unending destruction!

We are taught most powerfully by the discussion of this morning the great truth:—

1. "That no man liveth unto himself." Isolation, disseverance, absolute divorcement from our fellow creatures, is an impossibility. We are bound up in

undivided sympathy with everything human. From every one of us goes out a telling influence, which acts upon the souls of men, and women, and little children, all their life, and which will be felt throughout eternity. Every mature man and woman here knows this, even if they do not act in accordance with its moral significance. But I wish as well to impress this fact upon the boys and girls here this morning. Dear children, everything you do or say in life tells; tells upon souls; tells in all time; tells forever and ever. All your wicked passions tell upon others and upon yourselves; all your bitter words tell upon your younger brothers and sisters and companions; all your disobedience to parents and teachers; all your forgetfulness of God. Nothing that you do falls like leaves upon the ground; nothing that you say drops like feathers upon the earth. Every word, every act, TELLS!

Every day of our life, by our speech, by our conduct, by our lightest word, by our dress, by our habits, by our example, we are either building up souls, or we are dragging them down to deepest ruin. Beware, I beseech you, of the dread peril of the thought, if but for a moment, that you can live for yourselves; that you are to care for nothing else but your own interests! Be careful of your influence! Mind, I entreat you, how you touch or move the souls of men about you. It had been better that you had never been born, than that

you should foster the delusion that you have nothing to do with the interest and well-being of the soul of even the humblest of your neighbors. For they are our brethren—even the lowliest of our kind; and we are in trust for them, and for their souls. We live for them, and they too live for us. Every breath of ours tells upon their being, and theirs upon ours. And we shall only be earning the deepest damnation if we have the assurance to look up to the great white throne, and ask the Mighty One who sits thereon: “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

2. Again I remark that the subject we have been considering teaches us as well that “no man dieth unto himself”; and that therefore we may expect to be called to account for the measure of influence we have had in this world, and for the use we have made of it. God will reckon with us at the session of the great court, at the last day. That mighty gathering is designed for the settling of all the accounts of the world. The husbandman, in the Parable, who went on a long journey, and then came back and required a reckoning; the lord of the vineyard who took his departure into a far country, are types of the coming of the Son of Man to judgment. Our influence is among the deeds of life, which He will judge. They are our own individual, personal acts; and for them we shall be called to account. Whether that influence has been purposed or uncon-

scious, it matters not; we are, in every way, accountable for it. The thought is enough to make the "boldest hold his breath for a time." But, weighty and solemn as it is, let us strive to meet it, seeking the help of Christ; and in all the relations of life, in all our intercourse with society, in our utterance of speech, in our walk and conversation, in our habits, our dress and manners, may we never forget—nay, may we always remember—that there is a power going out from us which either lifts men up to God, or drags them down to hell!

And Thou, blessed and adorable Saviour, have mercy upon us, in all our weakness and infirmity! Leave us not, neither forsake us, Gracious Master, lest we fall ourselves, or ruin others. But give us all grace so to order our lives that our skirts may be free from the blood of men. Help us, strong Son of Man, that through our example, and by the impress of our character, many precious souls may be led, savingly, into the pathways of life, to enter at length the golden gates of the New Jerusalem!

SERMON XVI.

BUILDING MEN.

The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

I COR. III, 10.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

St. Paul here calls himself a builder; and nothing could be more significant of the specific end he has in view than this word which he uses. The word "build" means work or effort fitted to set up, to strengthen and establish. In this sense we see it illustrated in all the business and varied occupations of human life. St. Paul, however, transfers the meaning of the word from its usual material purport to the higher sphere of the soul and its operations. But its significance here is as real and actual as when applied to the visible works of man. The Apostle, in his sphere as a preacher, was as much a builder as a carpenter, or a mason; for the work of an Apostle was a most assured reality. It implied all the deep intensities of a most zealous soul in earnest activities to save and to bless. And while, in

other relations and for other minor ends, the mind of man is, for the most part, confined in single simple grooves, or circles in smaller circumferences, or plies but the simplest powers ; in this work of soul-building all the latent forces of the spirit are demanded for exercise, and must needs be used with constant and most painful effort.

Never, in any of the walks or works of life, was just such an use of human faculties to this grand specific end, seen beneath the skies, as was discovered in the life and labors of St. Paul, as a builder of God.

St. Paul then becomes a conspicuous example of the very work which he presents to our sight ; and we may refer to him, his words, and life, to illustrate the common duty of disciples to build up souls in the faith of Christ.

1. What is a builder ? The answer to this question will aid us very much in rightly considering the subject before us. I say then that a builder is one who brings together materials, and adjusts them properly, in order to secure symmetry, order, strength, coherence, and beauty. A spiritual builder is one whose materials are souls. The work to be done with them is their transference from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and then the adjustment of them in order, and precision, in beauty and coherence, into a temple of God. "Ye are the temple of the living

God," he tells the Corinthian Christians. So, even as a skilful architect takes huge blocks of granite or of marble and symmetrically sets them, piece by piece, in some grand temple or some majestic hall ; so a wise master-builder in God's church seeks soul after soul ; seeks its rescue from sin, its elevation into heavenly places in Christ, its purity and sanctification by the Spirit ; so that, redeemed and purified, each godly soul may take its proper place in that grand spiritual temple of the Lord Jesus which the Holy Spirit, ever since the day of Pentecost, has been uprearing with souls, gathered in from all lands, to the praise and glory of God's grace.

This process sets before us the vocation of a spiritual builder. He has two aims before him. His work is first to get hold of souls, and then, second, to fix them, as permanent parts or members of the Church of God.

1st. This getting hold of souls is a great work, and success therein is the test of a real builder for God. For so great is the subtilty and skill of Satan, and such is the hardness and grossness of the heart of man, that to effectually resist the one and to prevail with the other, is the surest proof that the preacher who can do this is sent of God, and that the words he speaks, and the spiritual cunning he plies, is attended by the Holy Spirit. No one but a man who has power can do such

a work as this. But it is of a certainty divine power; energy given by the Holy Ghost; might which descends from God, working through the powers of man. No mere human learning, sense, skilfulness, or eloquence, can make a master-builder for God. Well and powerfully did the great Apostle declare this truth two thousand years ago: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom." These, he declares, were not the things which gave him the saving skill of a real builder of souls. No! He must have that spiritual magnetism, if I may so term it, by which one soul, strong in the might of God, can go out to another soul, and grapple with its guilt and hate, and overcome it by the love of Christ. This was the might which made St. Paul a "wise master-builder"; that grand soul-converter, who swept along, with a power almost divine, from Jerusalem to Spain; casting down idols in every land, vanquishing the Devil in many of his strongholds, and capturing many of his victims, turning them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, into true servants of the Lord, valiant soldiers of the Cross.

But, 2d, souls, when saved, are to be fixed into the temple of God, as permanent parts or members thereof. Thus St. Paul tells the Ephesian Christians: "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of faith; and are

built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone ; in whom," adds the apostle, "all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." Here we have this permanent abiding of saints, their fixedness in God's Church, graphically set forth. And the mutual internal working of the members, fitted severally, as parts of the great temple, is singularly illustrated by another passage, in the same Epistle to the Ephesians: "From whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

What is that compacting power here spoken of? It is the operative spirit of sanctified souls, given them by the Holy Spirit. The children of God, like the wheels of Ezekiel's vision, go straight forward in active duty. Just in proportion to their zealous activity for Christ, so the unity of the Church is promoted. Work for God is the most concentrative of all the moral forces ; lessening all the disharmonies of minds and wills ; compacting alike the resources and energies of saints ; stimulating the largess of the rich, and the mite-giving of the poor ; staggering, by its spiritual formidableness, the kingdom of the Evil One, and so hastening on the day when a regenerated earth shall be brought into blissful conformity with the decrees of heaven.

2. So much, then, with regard to the qualities of a builder. Let us now consider what is the obligation of being builders of souls. Surely, it is to be this, or else to be destroyers! For herein, that is, in the things of God, there is no other alternative. Every man must be either uprearing, by his influence, the souls of his fellow men, or else, on the other hand, he is dragging them down to be broken, shattered, disastrous ruins!

There are, indeed, men who seem to think that there is some middle way in morals, which shuns the heights of good, or the depths of evil. There are people who would fain convince themselves that it is possible to stand in a place of utter indifference in spiritual matters; devoid of all moral responsibility. Never was there a more deceptive error framed by Satan for human ruin. There is no neutral line between the two great principles of good and evil; no intermediate point or party between the strong hosts of goodness, on the one hand, and the leagued bands of wrong and evil, on the other. In the universe of God there are two great principles ever antagonistic, one to the other; that which conserves, and that which destroys. And so, too, there are but two great classes of beings; God, Holy Angels, and good men on the one side; bad men, fiends, and the Devil on the other. There are but these two classes, and no other!

And to one of these two classes every one of us

belongs. There are, indeed, differences of character and degrees of depravity. Some men, in contrast with the outrageous and abominable, are gentle and generous; but if they are not for God, if they are not building for Christ and souls, if they are not aiming after God's glory, then, seemingly harmless though they be, they are nevertheless destroyers! Quietness, genial morality, amiability of character, cannot guarantee neutrality in the things of God. Men are either for God, or else they are against Him. "He that is not with me," says Christ, "is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." See the singular light which comes upon this point from the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus. When you examine the character of Dives you can discover nothing prodigious in immorality, nothing enormous in crime. From all that we see in Scripture, he was an easy, refined, gentlemanly man, laden with riches, perchance addicted to letters and given to the gratification of elegant tastes. There is no evidence that he was in any way monstrous in moral depravity. But during his lifetime he was not a builder for God. Self, and not God, was the main-spring of his being. There was no constructive element disclosed in his life or habits. His life work was not to save and bless. Hence he was ranked with the class of destructives in time, and sent to keep company with them in eternity!

But I beg to add to this that it is your duty not merely not to be destroyers, but to be builders, consciously and with purpose. Note here what God is—a Builder; ever since, as a great Architect, He laid the foundations of the universe, and built all the great fabrics of His creation: the globe, beasts, birds, fishes, and man, the crown of all! “Every house,” says St. Paul, “is built by some man; but He that built all things is God.”

Such is the Lord our God, the great builder of the universe; founding, uprearing, constructing, compacting all things, visible and invisible, temporal structures, and things heavenly and divine; but, above all, the souls of men and the ethereal frames of burning angels! And if this is the fashion of the Omnipotent being of God, what then should men be, who are His image and likeness? For the glory of children, is it not their fathers'? Ought we not be builders, as God is? How otherwise shall we show our similitude to Him? How can we become again the image of God, in Christ? The new creation, in Christ Jesus, for what is it wrought in us, if not to make us co-workers with Him, in the magnificent operations of His grand system?

Join to this the testimony of your own nature. Examine your own internal structure. Look into your spiritual framework, and see, as you cannot but see, that, in every way, the soul of man was made and fitted in

every attribute to be a builder of souls. What is the power of thought but a power formative in all its activities? What is reason but a constructive force? What imagination but a creative faculty? Nay, not only the inner and invisible endowments, but the outer physical members, yea, the entire man, in every power, was formed and fitted for creative action.

Take one single member, the hand, and mark its wonderful adaptedness to operations creative and fashioning. It can tear down and demolish. But everyone sees that that is not its special end and vocation. It was made to mould, to fashion, to construct and build. Hence, naturally from the functions of the hand, have sprung up the divers formative trades of men, in clay, wood, leather, stones, and metals.

But the hand of man, of itself, has no skilful cunning, no ingenious art. No more than the claw of a bird, or the foot of a squirrel or a rat. The hand, of itself, is nothing. But the hand is the instrument and agent of the soul. And because the soul of man is a builder, therefore it is that there are carpenters and wheelwrights, blacksmiths and machinists, ship-builders, stonemasons and architects, painters and sculptors.

But what are all these functions and faculties of men, compared with the grand creative power of God? "Let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness"; that was the crowning act of creation. But

man fell from his high estate into woe and ruin ; and then God began again the refashioning of humanity out of the ruins of the Fall. And ever since He has been building up man, by all the operations of the kingdom of grace ; by the workings of the Spirit. In this work of soul-building the blood of Jesus is the main instrumentality. But angels, and men too, are workers together with God, to the same gracious end.

Jesus died to build men. For this purpose the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost. For this the Church of God was founded on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

So again, to build men, the ministry was commissioned, and the Scriptures were given. When we preach, it is, by the Holy Spirit, to build men. When we baptize ; when we celebrate the Holy Communion ; when we catechise little children ; when we teach God's Holy Word ; when we bring souls to Confirmation. Indeed, the whole machinery, the entire apparatus of the Gospel and the Church, is to build men. This is the work of the Lord Jesus, in the whole economy of grace. This, too, is the work of all true Christian men. As God is a builder of souls, so are all His disciples. And although ministers are set apart to special duty in this grand work of soul-building, the laity of the Church, in a subordinate way, are likewise called to the same grand and solemn vocation. The whole household of Faith is

elected to this same saving office. We are all, in our several relations, the ministers of God for the salvation of men, and the glory of God's grace; holy men, godly and gracious women, religious youth, pious maidens, and sanctified children. Nothing can be more explicit, nothing more decisive, than the emphatic declaration of St. Peter: "Ye are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

3. And now, lastly, let us consider who, that is, the classes of persons, we should build up. First, of course, ourselves; for the evolutions of grace, like the winds, like the windings of circles, proceed from a central point. Our principal duty, then, in the work of grace, is the assurance that we, ourselves, have been built upon the right foundation; that our foot standeth aright upon the corner-stone. Are we, then, saved men? Have we, indeed, received the great salvation?

Our souls, my friends, are given us to save. It is a great trust to have souls. Broken and impaired as are the spirits of men, they show, even in fragmentary powers, the skill of a divine architect. All the fractured members of our inward being are so many vestiges of a once complete and celestial creation. And then when, in groping amid the ruins of our fallen nature, we light upon the manifest ends of

spiritual being, and note the grand principle of responsibility, which is universally allied to possessed powers, we see in a moment how man, as well as angels, is a being who sweeps the wide circles of duty; who bears the burden of endless moral obligation; who stands every day of his life at the bar of judgment, constantly challenged for a reckoning of his stewardship, for every faculty of his being, and for every function thereof; for the use of every endowment, for the exercise of influence, for the fashioning of souls around him, for the rendering of glory to God by the flames of purest affections, and the devotedness of the noblest of his powers.

But "no man liveth to himself." We were born to save others besides ourselves. "Ye are not your own," says the Apostle St. Paul. We are "our brothers' keepers." Besides care for our own souls, we owe the duty of care and anxiousness for the souls of others; and so, second, next to ourselves, are our kinsfolk and relatives to be built up in the faith of Jesus. It is our duty to strive to build up parents and children in the most holy faith; by all the several means of training and teaching, by admonition, by prayer and spiritual example.

In the family relation it is, without doubt, the most obvious of all duties to train up our children and servants; by catechising, in holy prayers, in Christian

charities ; so that they may “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” Build them ! that is the word ; not tear them down to ruin by godly indifference to the things of God ; by carnal indulgence ; by foolish vanity ! Not give them up to the service of Satan in their childhood and youth, expecting by and by, when mature, some terrible spiritual hurricane to sweep them, of a sudden, into the kingdom of Christ ; but to train them, in their tender youth, “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” ; to build them up in the truth and love of Christ ; in the very freshness and glow of their childhood, and in the supple strength of their youth !

Third. But besides kinsfolk and family, there is a further outer circle of human beings separate from ourselves, for whom it is our duty to live, and our aim to build up in the temple of the Lord. There is the whole world of our fellow creatures, both near and remote, who are to be reclaimed from sin and idolatry, and brought to a knowledge of the truth..

Now I know that in the narrowness of our local spheres, and with the limited reach of our powers, it is impossible for us, individually, to touch with a holy influence Chinese, Japanese, the Islanders of the Pacific Seas, the vast hordes on the continent of Africa, the million masses in India, living in the darkness of heathenism. But remember that our mission in life is to lessen the sum of the world’s grossness and rebel-

lion, and to widen and extend the borders of the kingdom of Christ. We are to gain as many souls as possible from the empire of Satan, and to transfer as large a number as we can to the control of our King and Master. Every victory thus gained, whether directly in the sphere of our personal influence, or indirectly, by the distant agents we aid and succor abroad, is a real and effectual agency in the conversion of the world, and is a contribution to the future triumph of the Redeemer.

So, then, it seems quite apparent that our life-work among our fellow-men is, especially and primarily, constructive and restorative. Christ came to seek and to save the lost. In His mission anything destructive or disorganizing was absolutely alien and foreign. Precisely this is the spirit we are to carry into all the spiritual endeavors of our life; and hence I conclude by narrowing my exhortation to its literal spirit and utterance.

I. That utterance is, to each and every one of you, the earnest entreaty—Do not destroy! Men and brethren, holy maidens and pious youth; keep from ruining souls for whom Christ died! Men of this Church, do not destroy other men! Do not destroy little children! Do not ruin women! Do not, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of precious, priceless souls—do not destroy. Women of this church, beware of ruining souls! Do not

destroy men nor youth by the wrong use of personal attractions ; by feminine beguilements ; by the gross prostitution of precious and wondrous gifts of your sex.

Boys and girls, baptized into Christ, do not destroy ! Nay, strive in all simplicity and gentleness, in all love and godliness, to save other boys and girls ; by sweet Christian words, by noble actions, by pure and holy lives and godly examples.

Yea, all of you, do not destroy ! Do not destroy by whiskey or by wine ! Do not destroy by cursing, nor by oaths ! Do not destroy by scoffing or by filthy speech, by lewdness or carousing. Do not destroy ! Brother man, I throw myself in your way, this day, and lay hold of you, as though you were my own flesh and blood ; and I beseech you, by the preciousness of the soul, and by the blood of Christ, do not destroy !

2. Build ! Seize upon souls, and strive to mould and fashion, to compact and strengthen the immortal spirits around you, that they may become powerful for Christ, and live in Him forever ! Take little children upon your knees, and by godly lessons teach them concerning Christ ; lead them to His love, and build them up in His most saving truth ! Lay hold of boys and girls. Gather them into Sunday-schools, and by catechising and instruction save them from the world, and build them up in Christ.

Remember you are your brother's keeper ; that every

man is your kinsman; and hence the binding duty of seeking the spiritual good of all men. Strive to bring them to the Cross. Endeavor to root and ground every soul you meet in the truth. Labor to build men in the knowledge and love of Christ.

Brethren, build! Make it the aim of your life to strengthen and uphold, to stay and build immortal souls. Do not destroy! It is the work of devils! Seek to be "wise master-builders" for Christ; and by the power of His Spirit to aid His work of grace and salvation in this wicked world. Build men! by speech, by influence, by godly example, "by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, and by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left"! Use every possible instrument and agency, both small and great, at all times, and in all places; in season and out of season; in your families; in the world; at the workshop; in your stores; on the highway or in the street; to save men, and to glorify Christ.

The great vocation of life, my brethren, is to build men up in truth and righteousness and love. It is a work, moreover, never to cease in this world, nor in that which is to come!

For through all the eternities of our God we shall dwell in blissful accord with Him, the great Builder of

souls ; and even as the angels, so we, through everlasting ages, with submissive wills, shall forever harmonize, as well in earnest act as in obedient desire, with all the multitudinous works of that God who, everywhere throughout the universe, is building, in truth, grace, and beauty—angels, and archangel, cherubim and seraphim, as well as saints in Paradise, and men on earth—through every quarter of His boundless Empire!

SERMON XVII.

CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION.

PSALM XI., 12.

I have declared thy righteousness in the great congregation : Lo, I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart ; my talk hath been of thy truth, and of thy salvation.

David is well known as one of the recognized types of the Messiah ; and hence, not infrequently, his Psalms are prophetic utterances of the will and purposes of his expected Lord. This, however, does not exclude entirely the personal element in the Psalms. It follows, therefore, that in the Messianic Psalms we may descend, if we choose, from the divine to the human character, speaking in them. We may regard them, therefore, in one phase as the sayings of the Messiah ; we may receive them, in a lower sense, as the expressions of the man David.

In this latter sense, then, the two verses just read will be used. They are veritable indications of the life and purposes of the great man who wrote them. He was a faulty man, a man of intense, nay, flashing im-

pulses, which at times hurried him impetuously into shameful blunders and blinding sin. But there can be no doubt that he was right, at the centre. The magnet of his nature pointed steadily, albeit tremulously, to the pole. The master intent of his being was to glorify God; not only with his sword, with his kingly prerogatives, with his regal wealth, but with his glowing genius, with his rich and fertile imagination, and with his pure, his ready, his flowing and exuberant tongue. And this is the distinctive point to which your attention is directed. David not only gave personal influence in God's behalf; he added to this the constant practice and habit of speaking for God.

There is a recluse and sequestered piety in the world, which shuns expression. It but seldom declares itself. It may walk abroad over the nation. It may cross the seas. It preserves indeed decorum and propriety; but it rarely speaks out for Christ. Such a character is by no means rare or exceptional. It is what we all see and know thoroughly well. We are all acquainted with praying, pious, upright people, strict observers of the moral law; people punctilious in spiritual observances and spiritual duties; who yet, in a large number of cases, have never been heard, at any time, or in any circles, to give utterance to their religious convictions, to advocate the faith of Christ, or to stand forth in defence of the faith against its assailants, or in the way of exhortation to holiness. In read-

ing the Psalms, however, we discover a spontaneous tendency, an almost irresistible impulse, to speak in God's behalf, and to declare His praise. We meet in them with frequent declarations, such as these: "With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of thy word." "I will talk of thy commandments and have respect unto thy ways." "I will always give thanks unto the Lord, His praise shall ever be in my mouth." "My tongue shall speak of thy word." And in another place (Psalm cviii), he says: "O God, my heart is ready; I will sing, and give praise with the best member that I have." By that best member the Psalmist means his tongue.

These somewhat lengthy remarks are made as introductory to a discourse on CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION.

I. First of all, let me dwell for a few moments upon that common characteristic of the times, the lack of Christian conversation. In this matter the age stands in strong contrast to some former notable periods. Take, for instance, a period of one hundred years, and one sees at once the great change. In the days of Whitefield and Wesley, men everywhere and in all conditions made religion a matter of common converse. Then great reforms took place. The traffic in slaves was stopped: the condition of prisoners improved: Church missions and Sunday-schools were established. Then society was almost universally stirred and excited

by the most glorious themes of the Gospel. Turn to a period nearer our own times ; the days of the Temperance and Anti-Slavery agitation, dating from 1833 to the close of the war ; what topics were more thoroughly, more earnestly canvassed, on steamboats, on railroads, in saloons, in parlors, and at dining-tables, than the bearing of Christian truth upon these great subjects. There was no hesitant utterance, no bated breath, in speaking upon these grand questions. There were deep convictions in the souls of faithful men ; and there was a free, distinct, and emphatic declaration of those convictions.

A very great change has come over society in these latter days. Not that there is any decline in common conversation. I think that this talent is more cultivated now-a-days than heretofore. Men meet together, and talk about science, letters, manners, politics. Every possible facility is used to stimulate social talk ; magazine literature, parlor socials, literary reunions, club life, in various forms, and in all circles. Rarely, if ever, was there a time when there has been such brilliancy of conversational talent, as in our generation. In the higher walks of society there has been discovered a splendor and magnificence of discourse which has rivalled the palmiest day of literary society, whether in ancient or modern days. It may well be doubted whether the ears of man have ever secured any higher

enjoyment than was the privilege of those who moved, in but recent times, in the circles which were charmed by the magic tongue of Margaret Fuller, of Boston; or on the other side of the Atlantic, who were spell-bound by both the affluence and the splendors of Macauley. But the whole tone of it, in either case, was mainly secular. In the circles where these gifted persons swayed the sceptre of superiority, very little was heard of God. And it is precisely the same to-day. Nowhere do we see intellectual stagnation. The mind of man is intensely active in all the subjects of human regard. Talk and converse are rife and earnest in all classes, upon all the questions which pertain to human interests and human progress; but religious conversation is seldom heard. We do, indeed, not seldom, hear debates upon sacred subjects. Not infrequently we listen to angry disputations upon religious topics, that remind us slightly and in degree of Milton, who represents the evil spirits' converse, who,

Reasoned high

Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;

Fixed fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute;

And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

But it is not of discussion that I speak. The two things are distinct. That genial, intelligent interchange of thought, sentiment, and feeling, which is the opposite of debate, which may properly be termed conversa-

tion, is the theme to which your attention is especially directed. The very word tells, in its construction, of that meeting of mind with mind, in reciprocal flux and reflux; that cordial assimilation; where thought melts into feeling, and feeling flows back again into thought, which may justly be considered as the true interpretation of the word converse; *con* and *verso*—to turn with, to be engaged with; and so to hold intercourse, or interchange ideas; to talk; to discourse with. And this, instead of being made the channel of blessedness to man, and of glory to God, is used mostly, in our day, as the glittering agency of temporal, fleeting things. Instead of being the vehicle of trifling and nonsense, or worse still, of blasphemy and profanation, it ought to be the grand organ and implement for the uplifting of souls, and the regeneration of society. The speech of man should be the noblest instrument of the Holy Ghost.

Observe, then, how desirable, in every way, is the practice of converse upon the things of God. It is desirable, first of all, for the propagation of the Christian system. For Christianity, my brethren, is not a retired and hidden thing. Christianity is no private monopoly. It is no exclusive, personal possession. It would be just as possible or wise for a man to attempt to lock up, for private use, the sunlight of heaven, or the common air of earth, as for a man, or any set of

men, to set up a special proprietorship in the Christian faith. By the grace of God that grace is made over to every human being, as a man, for his individual right and ownership; but the condition on which it is given to him is that he will use it in trusteeship for other souls. Every divine gift made over to the soul by the Holy Spirit has allied to it the principle of *participation*. "Freely have ye received, freely give."

The secondary principle of God's grace is *diffusion*. When light is given to a sin-darkened soul, the obligation accompanies it to impart that light to others. The candle is not to be put under a bushel. Let it shine upon the household. Let it lighten up the neighborhood. The grand instrument and agency by which the Christian faith is diffused is the tongue. And speech, rightly used, is man's "best member"; is, as David elsewhere calls it, "man's glory."

It is in just this peculiarity that we see that Christianity is eminently a social religion; and by social I mean that it is a system for human beings in all the varied relations of life. It is a system for the family; for the public weal. It is the grand quality which is especially fitted to the needs of man in all these relations. The means for its propagation, in these relations, is speech. It is a social religion, because it is made to be talked *of*, and talked *into* every sphere of life, and to rule and govern them all.

Just look at the matter for a few moments. Is not this a wicked world in which we are living? See how, in every quarter, it is saturated with the putrefaction of sin! How its most cherished institutions are falling to pieces, through the virulent inroads of iniquity! Take the *State*. Do not the individuals who go to make up the great commonwealth of society, do they not need the implanting of proper principles of right and integrity in their souls, to make them good citizens? Can you leave this matter simply to newspapers, or preaching? How do men act in matters of reform, in the cause of temperance, of politics? Does not one man put himself beside another man, and so strive to indocctrinate him with the truth that is precious to his own soul? Is not conversation, genial, hearty, earnest, and persuasive, a potent factor in all political and reformatory action? Take *social life*, in its narrower, stricter sense, that is, as including the world of entertainment and companionship. Does not society need the infusion and prevalence of higher principles than at present govern it? Would it not be blest and elevated by the presence of some higher and diviner element than it now has? For go where you will in our seasons of festivity, how much, I ask, of God, of the love of God, of the honor of God, does one discover, in the dress, the style of dress, in the cost of dress, in the pleasures, in the viands, in the drinks, and in the conversation which

is carried on in such assemblies? Is not salt, the savory, saving salt of the Gospel needed here? Would not a few words from the godly, interposed now and then, tend to the prevention of much sinful vanity, much moral ruin, and a vast deal of godless dissipation? Take the *family*. Go into a dozen households, and see how, in a large majority of them, the lawlessness of children prevails, right beside the misrule of weak and godless parents. And tell me, do not parents need the suggestion of godly rule; and children, "the line upon line, the precept upon precept," to the end that these households may become orderly, God-fearing, and sanctified? But is it not the fact that at multitudes of firesides, and at numberless dinner-tables, the name of God is never mentioned; the law of God is never proclaimed; the testimony of Christ is never upheld; the worship of God is never heard of? The children in such families hear, indeed, concerning the fashions; they talk about politics and literature; they are made adepts in all the gossip concerning their neighbors; nay, not infrequently their memories are surcharged with all the poisonous scandal of the town; but alas! from year to year they hear nothing from the lips of parents or friends concerning the active workings of God's Church, or the glories of the Cross of Christ. And when the day of judgment comes the very knives and forks, the spoons and dishes of those houses will testify that they were

Godless and Christless ! * Lastly, take the *sick, the troubled, the distressed*. Where are they not to be found ? Where are the communities or households free from these classes ? And what is the solace you are going to give them ? How are their sorrows to be assuaged ? How are their griefs to be palliated ? How are their hearts to be cheered and uplifted ? Will you talk of science to the broken-hearted ? Will you discourse of literature to the bereaved and mourning ? Will you bring the wrangles of politics to women and children racked with pain, and verging to the borders of eternity ? My brethren, there is but *one Physician* for sick souls ; but one medicine for the broken-hearted and desolate. It was Jesus—only Jesus ; no other of all the sages and prophets, of the benefactors and philanthropists, who ever taught just the converse needed and fitted for the sick, for the troubled and distressed, in mind, body, and estate. “The spirit of the Lord is upon me,” are His words, “because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor ; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” Here we see the converse which is needed for bruised hearts ! Nothing but religious conversation is fitted to their condition. Christ, the Consoler, must needs be brought to their bedsides ! The very words of Jesus poured into their ears. The

Grace of the Lord made to reach their hearts. The comfort of the Holy Ghost to neutralize their afflictions. This is the only source of consolation to the sick and mourners. The Gospel of salvation, given through Christian conversation, is the only solace to the sorrowful.

3. It is, then, very clearly our duty to use the faculty of speech for God's glory, for the health and strengthening of human souls. "A word in season, how precious" is it, and how priceless too! And what nobler work can there be than this, namely, by the uttered, quickening word, to plant the seeds of everlasting truth in living and undying souls? All the processes of building and uprearing in this world are prized by men. All builders are esteemed as benefactors of the race. But by just so much as souls are nobler, grander structures than houses, or palaces, or bodies, so the vital energy of pure and holy speech, dropt into the outward and inner ears of men, startling, quickening, sobering, prompting, guiding, elevating, sanctifying them, to good resolves, to noble acts, to self-devotion to God and man, to purity, to excellence and heavenly-mindedness; so the work and power of holy speech towers immeasurably above all the constructive work of architects and builders in this outward, visible world. And this is the true and legitimate function of speech. It is to sow the seeds of truth in the souls of men. It is to suggest

virtuous principles. It is to prompt to sober, serious thought and reflection. It is to guide to noble conceptions. It is to bring to consciousness the ideas of God and eternity. It is to beget a sense of responsibility. It is to start the springs of action. It is to excite the noblest sensibilities and warmest affections. Conversation, true Christian conversation, is the parent of deep repentance; it is the germinant power of abiding faith; it is the quickener of noble resolves; it is the prompter of heroic actions; it is the stimulant to godlike revolutions from the sway of Satan, to the rule of the living God. Bear witness, ye glorious names of Moses, and Elijah, of Paul, and Augustine, and all the mighty host of apostles and reformers, who have blessed the world through speech! What noble elevation! What grand superiority is there not in the men who thus use the noble faculty of speech! How gloriously do they disperse the largess of their intellectual riches, of their spiritual gifts! With what spontaneous generosity scatter the pearls and diamonds of their priceless thought! Now it is the apt allusion, and now again the humorous remark, but at the same time sacred and elevating. At one time it is the sparkling sentence, brilliant with divinest meaning; and then the grand, stately utterance, like the thunderous breaking of old ocean on the seashore, suggesting the deep things of eternity! What a noble line of such talkers have

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arisen in God's Church, in all the ages! Chief of these in ancient times was Solomon, whose terse and prudent sayings were doubtless taken down by his admirers, and thus handed down to our times, for our instruction and guidance. So, without doubt, that eminent man, the chief of the apostles, was full of large discourse. Everywhere we see him, in the Book of the Acts, in private or in public, before a heathen court, or the Jewish Sanhedrim; at a feast of disciples, or in the midst of shipwrecked mariners; always ready with a golden speech for Christ and souls. In modern times *two* transcendent men stand out conspicuously. The Table-Talk of Luther is like the trumpet-blast of an army; like the ponderous tread of grand battalions; like the thunderous sound of dread artillery! All his thought, all his discourse, is grand, majestic, ponderous; stirring the blood, quickening the brain; raising one to the grandest ideas of God, His kingdom, and eternity. The other distinguished person to whom I referred was, in various respects, the reverse of Luther. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a scholar, poet, theologian, philosopher; but grand genius as he was, his highest aspiration was to be, and to be regarded as a Christian! And oh! how gloriously did he move, at all times, in the grandest circles; dropping everywhere—at the well-spread board, in the chambers of nobles, in the bowers of the fashionable, in the halls of the learned—precepts and philoso-

phies, learning and erudition, light and illumination upon all the subjects which pertain to the elucidation of God's Holy Word, and the spiritual elevation of the soul of man !

4. "But *how*," you ask, "are we to imitate such grandeur, in talk and converse? God has given us no such gifts as they had. We have no such splendid endowments, either of brain or utterance, as they." "Every man," my brethren, in "his own order," and with his own talent; to some it is five, to others two, to others one. The point, that is, of responsibility, is the *use* of the gift of speech, according to our ability and opportunity. You converse about letters, fashions, politics, persons. If you are a disciple use your speech, now and then, for Christ! You tell me it is hard to talk about religion. You can talk about everything else with your neighbors, but this is difficult. I understand you, and I can say nothing severe of this reticence, this hesitation regarding sacred subjects. For many people are reluctant and unwilling to speak concerning this most sacred of all themes, lest they should be betrayed into a habit of cant; which is the simulation of feeling when one has no feeling. Others are afraid of becoming flippant about holy things.

And, first, let me say there can be no general rule given concerning religious conversation. Perhaps the nearest approach one can make to a precept, are the

words of St. Paul : " Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." That is, our conversation should be saturated with pious and religious prudence flowing from the Holy Spirit. With such a habit, religion is the undercurrent which regulates speech ; not, indeed, showy and ostentatious, but sufficient to indicate that inward principle which governs the life, and is easily apprehended by every one. Neither is there any need that we should obtrude religious topics upon people everywhere, and at all times. There are occasions, too, when dealing with the rude and irreligious, that we should remember our Lord's words, not " to cast our pearls before swine." People who jest concerning the most solemn themes, people who travesty the holy words of Scripture are undeserving religious converse. But in ordinary conversation we should talk with such a sense of sacred propriety, with such Christian cheerfulness, with such generous courtesy for the opinions and feelings of others, that although the name of Christ be never mentioned, people may gather that we have been with Him, and that His Holy Spirit is the prompter of our life and thought.

On the other hand, there are times when our discourse should be most direct and distinct. Straightforwardness and downrightness, in many circumstances, are the duty of Christians. When we are dealing with the sick, with people who are anxious and inquiring, with

indifferent and careless people, then circumlocution or indirection is a great fault. I recollect reading of the late Mr. Sumner's visit to Thiers, President of France. As he passed through the grand entrance to his parlor, Mr. Sumner said that he asked himself—"What shall I converse about to-night?" and at once he answered himself—"Art shall be the topic." And it was only the other day, in this city, being called upon to visit and converse with an invalid, I was pleased with the same decision of mind. I was hardly seated, after the usual salutation, when I was addressed by the person referred to in these words: "I wished very much to talk with you about three topics which have occasioned me much thought." The first, such and such a passage, naming the verse; and so, with a clearness and a pertinence which could not have been excelled by a scholar, this person went from subject to subject without hesitation and without reserve. And so can every one of us do, if we have it in our heart to say a word for Christ, and the purpose to say that word.

My friends, let us say a word now and then to men for Christ. They need Christian converse; nay, they often desire it and look for it. While there are people who live daily, yearly, with no thought of God, there are, believe me, numbers of others who think about Him, and only wait some kind and friendly person to quicken their souls to life and faith, and resolve, by a

timely utterance. And because you fail to speak of the things of God, they are disappointed. Be faithful to souls, in your conversation, as we'll as in your walk and bearing. But bear in mind two things. (1) That no stilted, formal, unmeaning words on religion, will reach any man's soul. If you are not impelled by duty and interest in men to talk with them concerning religious matters, hold your tongue. (2) Join to this the duty of avoiding all debate and wrangling upon religion. It is, be well assured, a most profitless thing. Ofttimes it is worse than this; it is a matter of strife, ambition, and temper; almost utterly regardless of truth as its objective point. Indeed, most generally the work of Christians is to persuade and invite the careless; not to dispute with them. If you enter into controversy, men are likely to think you care more for victory than you do for their souls, albeit a zealous warmth for the faith is always a virtue and duty, with gainsaying men.

Speak, then, to your fellow-creatures from a sense of duty, and with anxiousness for their welfare. It is only deep conviction, prompting earnest, loving speech, that will influence men. Remember that all speech, except with very deceptive people, all speech is the result of conviction. This specially is the case in religious matters. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "I believed, and therefore have I spoken," are the words of David. Elihu, in the book

of Job, tells us the same truth—"I am full of matter," he says: "The spirit within me constraineth me." "Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles." "I will speak, that I may be refreshed; I will open my lips and answer." The sense of these words is on the surface. The man was possessed, charged to the full with burning, all-consuming convictions, and he could not contain himself. So possess yourselves, my friends, with the great truths of the religion you profess. Let them color the very fibres of your being; let them run like fire through your brains; and then there will be no hesitant, tardy discourse from your mouths, in your intercourse with men. Deep convictions are always the parents of earnest, saving words. Harlan Page was so thoroughly overcome by the preciousness of the salvation given by Christ to his soul, that it forced him to speak, and he began the Christian life with the resolve to say something of salvation to every man he associated with. And thus, by Christian conversation, he converted, in a brief life-time, over three hundred souls. "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies." "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

SERMON XVIII.

THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLE AMONG A PEOPLE: AND ITS
BEARING ON THEIR PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT.

Thanksgiving Day, 1875.

ISAIAH XLI, 6, 7.

They helped every one his neighbor, and every one said to his brether, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved.

More than a month has passed away since we received the proclamation of our Chief Magistrate, appointing the 25th of November a day of public thanksgiving to Almighty God.

And, in accordance with this pious custom, we, in common with millions of our fellow-citizens, have met together this morning, to offer up our tribute of praise and thankfulness to our common Parent in heaven, for all the gifts, favors, blessings, and benefactions, civil, domestic, religious, and educational, which have been bestowed upon us during the year; for the blessings of heaven above; for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun; for the precious things of the earth and the

fulness thereof; for the golden harvests of peace, unstained by blood, and unbroken by strife; for the constant stream of health which has flowed through our veins and households, untainted by plague or pestilence; for the babes whom the Lord has laid upon your arms and given to your hearts; for the plentiful supply of food which has been granted us from the fields, and which has laden our boards; for the goodly instruction which trains the mind and corrects the hearts of our children, and prepares them for responsibility, for duty, and eternity; for the civil privileges and the national freedom, in which we are permitted to participate; for the measure of success which God has given His Gospel, and for the hope that is ours that the Cross shall yet conquer everywhere beneath the sun, and that JESUS shall rule and reign through all the world. For these and all other gifts and blessings we render our tribute of praise and gratitude to the Lord, our Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord!

Grateful as is this theme of gratitude, and inviting as it is for thought and further expression, it is not my purpose to pursue it to-day. I feel that we should turn the occasion into an opportunity for improvement and progress.

Especially is this the duty of a people situated as we are in this country; cut loose, blessed be God, for ever-

more, from the dark moorings of servitude and oppression; but not fully arrived at—only drifting towards, the deep, quiet waters of fullest freedom and equality. Few, comparatively, in numbers; limited in resources; the inheritors of prodigious disasters; the heirs of ancestral woes and sorrows; burdened with most manifest duties and destinies; anxious for our children; thoughtful for our race; culpability and guilt of the deepest dye will be ours, if we do not most seriously consider the means and instruments by which we shall be enabled to go forward, and to rise upward. It is peculiarly a duty at this time when there is evidently an ebb-tide of indifference in the country, with regard to our race; and when the anxiety for union neutralizes the interest in the black man.

The agencies to the high ends I have referred to are various; but the text I have chosen suggests a train of thought, in a distinct and peculiar line. It shews us that spirit of unity which the world exhibits, when it would fain accomplish its great, commanding ends.

The prophet shews us here the notable sight, that is, that God comes down from heaven to put an end to the devices of the wicked. Whatever discord and strife may have before existed among them, at once it comes to an end. A common danger awaits them; a common peril menaces. At once they join hands; immediately their hearts are united. "They helped every one his

neighbor, and every one said to his neighbor, 'be of good courage.'

The lesson is one which we shall do well to learn with diligence; that it comes from the wicked, does not detract from its value. The world acts on many a principle which Christians would do well to lay to heart. Our Saviour tells us that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." So here, this principle of united effort, and of generous concord, is worthy of the imitation of the colored people of this country, if they would fain rise to superiority of both character and achievement. I shall speak, therefore, of the "*Social principle among a people; and its bearing on their progress and development.*"

What I mean by the social principle, is the disposition which leads men to associate and join together for specific purposes; the principle which makes families and societies, and which binds men in unity and brotherhood, in races and churches and nations.

For man, you will observe, is a social being. In his mental and moral constitution God has planted certain sympathies and affections, from which spring the desire for companionship. It is with reference to these principles that God declared of the single and solitary Adam, "It is not good for the man to live alone." It was no newly-discovered affinity of the Maker, no afterthought of the Almighty. He had *formed* His creature

with a fitness and proclivity for association. He had made him with a nature that demanded society. And from this principle flows, as from a fountain, the loves, friendships, families, and combinations which tie men together, in union and concord. A wider and more imposing result of this principle is the welding of men in races and nationalities. All the fruit and flower of these organisms come from the coalescence of divers faculties and powers, tending to specific ends. For no one man can effect anything important alone. There never was a great building, a magnificent city, a noble temple, a grand cathedral, a stately senate-house which was the work of one single individual. We know of no important event in history, no imposing scheme, no great and notable occurrence which stands as an epoch in the annals of the race, which was accomplished by a single, isolated individual. Whether it is the upbuilding of Imperial Rome; or the retreat of the Ten Thousand; or the discovery of America; or Cook's or Anson's voyages around the globe; or the conquest of India; or the battle of Waterloo; everywhere we find that the great things of history have been accomplished by the combination of men.

Not less is this the case in those more humane and genial endeavors which have been for the moral good of men, and wherein the individuality of eminent leaders has been more conspicuous. We read of the evangeli-

zation of Europe, from the confines of Asia to Britain; and, in more modern times, we have the abolition of the Slave Trade and Slavery, the grand efforts for the relief of prisoners, the Temperance Reformation, the Sunday-school system. These were noble schemes, which originated in the fruitful brains and sprung from the generous hearts of single individuals, and which, in their gracious results, have made the names of Howard and Wilberforce, of Clarkson and Robert Raikes, bright and conspicuous. But yet we know that even they of themselves did not achieve the victories which are associated with their names. Thousands, nay, tens of thousands of the good and pious were aroused by their passionate appeals to stirring energy; and only when the masses of the godly were marshalled to earnest warfare, were those evils doomed; and they fell, never to rise again!

The application of this truth to the interests and the destiny of the colored race of America is manifest. We are living in this country, a part of its population, and yet, in divers respects, we are as foreign to its inhabitants as though we were living in the Sandwich Islands. It is this our actual separation from the real life of the nation, which constitutes us "a nation within a nation:" thrown very considerably upon ourselves for many of the largest interests of life, and for nearly all our social and religious advantages. As a consequence on this

state of things, all the stimulants of ambition and self-love should lead this people to united effort for personal superiority and the uplifting of the race; but, instead thereof, overshadowed by a more powerful race of people; wanting in the cohesion which comes from racial enthusiasm; lacking in the confidence which is the root of a people's stability; disintegration, doubt, and distrust almost universally prevail, and distract all their business and policies.

Among a people, as in a nation, we find farmers, mechanics, sailors, servants, business men, trades. For life, energy, and progress in a people, it is necessary that all these various departments of activity should be carried on with spirit, skill, and unity. It is the coöperative principle, working in trades, business, and manufacturing, which is the great lever that is lifting up the million masses in great nations, and giving those nations themselves a more masterly superiority than they have ever known, in all their past histories. No people can discard this principle, and achieve greatness. Already I have shown that it cannot be done in the confined sphere of individual, personal effort. The social principle prevails in the uprearing of a nation, as in the establishing of a family. Men must associate and combine energies in order to produce large results. In the same way that a family becomes strong, influential, and wealthy by uniting the energies of parents and

children, so a people go on to honor and glory, in the proportion and extent that they combine their powers to definite and productive ends.

Two principles are implied in the remarks I have made, that is, the *one* of mutuality, and the *other* of dependence.

By *mutuality* I mean the reciprocal tendencies and desires which interact between large bodies of men, aiming at single and definite ends. I mean the several sentiments of sympathy, cheer, encouragement, and combination, among any special body of people; which are needed and required in distinct departments of labor. Solitude, in any matter, is alien to the human heart. We need, we call for the aid of our fellow-creatures. The beating heart of man waits for the answering heart of his brother.

It is the courageous voice of the venturesome soldier that leads on a whole column to the heart of the fray. It is the cheering song of the hardy sailor as he hangs upon the shrouds, amid the fierceness of the tempest, that lifts up the heart of his timid messmates; and stimulates to boldness and noble daring. On the broad fields of labor, where the scythe, the plough, and the spade work out those wondrous transformations which change the wild face of nature to order and beauty, and in the end, bring forth those mighty cargoes of grain which gladden the hearts and sustain the frames of

millions; there the anthems of toil invigorate the brawny arms of labor; while the sun pours down its fiery rays, and the midday heat allures in vain to the shade and to rest. Deep down in the dark caves of earth, where the light of the sun never enters, tens of thousands of men and children delve away in the coal beds, or iron mines, buried in the bowels of the earth; cheered on in their toilsome labor by the joyous voices and the gladdening songs of their companions. What is it, in these several cases, that serves at once to lighten toil, and to stimulate to hardier effort? Several principles indeed concur; but it is evident that what I call mutuality, *i. e.*, sympathy and unison of feeling, act upon the hearts of soldiers, sailors, laborers, and miners, and spur them on to duty and endurance.

So, likewise, we may not pass by the other motive, *i. e.*, the feeling of *dependence*. We need the skill, the energy, the achievement of our fellow-creatures. No man stands up entirely alone, self-sufficient in the entire circle of human needs. Even in a state of barbarism the rude native man feels the need of the right arm of his brother. How much more with those who are civilized and enlightened! If you or I determine upon absolute independency of life and action, rejecting the arm and the aid of all other men, into how many departments of labor should we not at once have to multiply ourselves?

It is the recognition of this principle of association, which has made Great Britain, France, the United States, Holland, and Belgium the greatest nations of the earth. There are more partnerships, combinations, trades-unions, banking-houses, and insurance companies in those countries than in all the rest of the world together. The mere handful of men in these nations, numbering but one hundred millions, sway and dominate all the other nine hundred millions of men on the globe. Or just look at one single instance in our own day: here are England and France—fifty-eight millions of men—who, united, only a few years ago, humbled the vast empire of China, with its three hundred millions of semi-civilized inhabitants.

The principles of growth and mastery in a race, a nation, or people, are the same all over the globe. The same great agencies which are needed to make a people in one quarter of the globe and in one period of time are needed here, at this time, in this American nationality. We children of Africa in this land are no way different from any other people in these respects. Many of the differences of races are slight and incidental, and oftentimes become obliterated by circumstances, position, and religion. I can take you back to a period in the history of England when its rude inhabitants lived in caves and huts, when they fed on bark and roots, when their dress was the skins of animals. When you next

look at some eminent Englishman, the personification, perchance, of everything cultivated, graceful, and refined, you may remember that his distant ancestors were wild and bloody savages, and that it has taken ten centuries to change him from the rudeness of his brutalized forefathers into an enlightened and civilized human being.

The great general laws of growth and superiority are unchangeable. The Almighty neither relaxes nor alters them for the convenience of any people. Conformity, then, to this demand for combination of forces is a necessity which we, as a people, cannot resist without loss and ruin. We cannot pay heed to it too soon; for if there has been anything for which the colored people of this country have been and now are noted, it is for disseverance, the segregation of their forces, the lack of the co-operative spirit. Neither in farming operations, nor trades, nor business, nor in mechanical employment, nor marketing, nor in attempts at grocery-keeping, do we find attempts at combination of their forces. No one hears anywhere of a company of fifty men to start a farm, to manufacture bricks, to begin a great trading business, to run a mill, or to ply a set of vessels in the coasting trade. No one sees a spontaneous movement of thirty or forty families to take possession of a tract of land for a specific monetary venture. Nowhere do we see a united movement

in any State for general moral and educational improvement, whereby the masses may be delivered from inferiority and degradation.* The people, as a body, seem delivered over to the same humble, servile occupations of life in which their fathers trod, because, from a lack of co-operation they are unable to step into the higher callings of business ; and hence penury, poverty, inferiority, dependence, and even servility is their one general characteristic throughout the country, along with a dreadful state of mortality.

And the cause of this inferiority of purpose and of action is two-fold, and both the fault, to some extent, of unwise and unphilosophic leaders. For, since, especially emancipation, *two* special heresies have influenced and governed the minds of colored men in this nation : (1.) The one is the dogma which I have heard frequently from the lips of leaders, personal and dear, but mistaken, friends, *that the colored people of this country should forget, as soon as possible, that they ARE colored people* :—a fact, in the first place, which is an impossibility. Forget it, forsooth, when you enter a saloon and are repulsed on account of your color ! Forget it when

*I am advised by an intelligent friend, that the above allegations need modification ; that some few such organizations have been made in two or three of the Southern States and in the City of Baltimore. The "COLORED EDUCATIONAL CONVENTION" of Virginia deserves distinguished consideration and great commendation.

you enter a car, South or West, and are denied a decent seat! Forget it when you enter the Church of God, and are driven to a hole in the gallery! Forget it when every child of yours would be driven ignominiously from four-fifths of the common schools of the country! Forget it, when thousands of mechanics in the large cities would make a "strike" rather than work at the same bench, in the same yard, with a black carpenter or brick-maker! Forget it, when the boyhood of our race is almost universally deprived of the opportunity of learning trades, through prejudice! Forget it, when, in one single State, twenty thousand men dare not go to the polls on election-day, through the tyranny of caste! Forget it, when one great commonwealth offers a new constitution for adoption, by which a man like *Dumas* the younger, if he were a North Carolinian, could be indicted for marrying the foulest white woman in that State, and merely because she was white! Forget that you are colored, in these United States! Turn madman, and go into a lunatic asylum, and then, perchance, you may forget it! But, if you have any sense or sensibility, how is it possible for you, or me, or any other colored man, to live oblivious of a fact of so much significance in a land like this! The only place I know of in this land where you can "forget you are colored" is the grave!

But not only is this dogma folly, it is disintegrating

and socially destructive. For shut out, for instance, as I am and you are from the cultivated social life of the superior classes of this country, if I forget that I am a black man, if you ignore the fact of race, and we both, ostrich-like, stick our heads in the sand, or stalk along, high-headed, oblivious of the actual distinctions which *do* exist in American society, what are you or I to do for our social nature? What will become of the measure of social life among ourselves which we now possess? Where are we to find our friends? Where find the circles for society and cheerful intercourse?

Why, my friends, the only way you, and I, and thousands of our people get domestic relations, marry wives and husbands, secure social relations, form good neighborhood and companionship, is by the very remembrance which we are told to scout and forswear.

2. The other dogma is the demand *that colored men should give up all distinctive effort, as colored men, in schools, churches, associations, and friendly societies.* But this, you will observe, is equivalent to a demand to the race to give up all civilization in this land and to submit to barbarism. The cry is: "Give up your special organization." "Mix in with your white fellow-citizens."

Now I waive, for the present, all discussion of abstract questions of rights and prerogatives. I direct my attention to the simple point of practicality; and

I beg to say, that this is a thing which cannot be forced. Grieved, wearied and worried as humanity has been with the absurd, factitious arrangements of society in every quarter of the globe, yet men everywhere have had to wait. You can batter down oppression and tyranny with forceful implements; not so social disabilities and the exclusiveness of caste. The Saxon could not force it upon the Norman. Upon this point, if everything is not voluntary, generous, gracious, and spontaneous, the repulsive will is as icy, and as obstinate too, as Mt. Blanc. I wonder that the men who talk in the style I have referred to, forget that nine-tenths of the American people have become so poisoned and stimulated by the noxious influence of caste, that, in the present day, they would resist to the utmost before they would allow the affiliations, however remote, that implied the social or domestic principle.

Nay, more than this: not only would they reject your advances, but, after they had repelled you, they would leave you to reap the fruits of your own folly in breaking up your own distinctive and productive organisms, under the flighty stimulants of imaginative conceit.

And the disaster, undoubtedly, would be deserved; not, indeed, morally, for the inflictions of caste are unjust and cruel; but because of your unwisdom; for it is the office of common sense to see, as well the exact situation, to comprehend the real condition of things as

they exist in this nation ; as well as to take cognizance of the pernicious and atrocious virulence of caste !

Few things in policy are more calamitous in result than mere conceit. An unbalanced and blind imagination is one of the most destructive, most disastrous of all guides. Such I believe to be the nature of the suggestions which I reprobate. But remember, I do not condemn the men who hold them. Oppression and caste are responsible for many worse things than unwisdom, or blind speculation. How intolerable are the distinctions which hedge up our ardent, ambitious minds, on every side, I thoroughly apprehend ! How the excited mind turns passionately to every fancied and plausible mode of escape, I can easily understand ! But remember that the pilotage of a whole people, of an entire race, through the quicksands and the breakers of civil and social degradation, up to the plane of manly freedom and equality, while it is, by its very hazards, calculated to heighten the pulse, and to quicken the activity of the brain, is, nevertheless, just that sort of work which calls for the coolest head, and the hardest, most downright reasonableness. When you are pleading for natural rights, when men are endeavoring to throw off the yoke of oppression, you may indeed

—imitate the action of the tiger,

Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood.

But a war against a gross public sentiment, a contest

with prejudices and repulsions, is a thing of a different kind, and calls for a warfare of an opposite character. You cannot destroy caste with a ten pounder! You cannot sweep away a prejudice with a park of artillery!

I know, to use the words of another, "how difficult it is to silence imagination enough to make the voice of Reason even distinctly heard in this case; as we are accustomed from our youth up to indulge that forward and delusive faculty ever obtruding beyond its sphere; of some assistance indeed to apprehension, but the author of all error; as we plainly lose ourselves in gross and crude conception of things, taking for granted that we are acquainted with what indeed we are wholly ignorant of";* so it seems to me the gravest of all duties to get rid of all delusions upon this subject; and to learn to look at it in the light of hard, serious, long-continued, painful, plodding work. It is *work*, you will observe, not abnormal disturbances, not excitement; but a mighty effort of moral and mental reconstruction, reaching over to a majestic end. And then when that is reached and secured, then all the hindrances of caste will be forever broken down!

Nothing is more idle than to talk of the invincibility of prejudice. The Gospel is sure to work out all the issues and results of brotherhood, everywhere under the sun, and in this land; but, until that day arrives,

* Bishop Butler.

we are a nation, set apart, in this country. As such, we have got to strive—not to get rid of ourselves; not to agonize over our distinctive peculiarities; but to accept the situation as Providence allows it, and to quit “ourselves as men,” in, if you say so, painful and embarrassing circumstances; determined to shift the groove of circumstance, and to reverse it.

The special duty before us is to strive for footing and for superiority in this land, *on the line of race*, as a temporary but needed expedient, for the ultimate extinction of caste, and all race distinctions. For if *we* do not look after our own interests, as a people, and strive for advantage, no other people will. It is folly for mere idealists to content themselves with the notion that “we are American citizens”; that, “as American citizens, ours is the common heritage and destiny of the nation”; that “special solicitude for the colored people is a superfluity”; that “there is but one tide in this land; and we shall flow with all others on it.”

On the contrary, I assert, we are just now a “peculiar people” in this land; looked at, repulsed, kept apart, legislated for, criticised in journals, magazines, and scientific societies, at an insulting and intolerable distance, *as* a peculiar people; with the doubt against us whether or not we can hold on to vital power on this soil; or whether we have capacity to rise to manhood and superiority.

And hence I maintain that there is the greatest need for us all to hold on to the remembrance that *we* are "colored men," and not to forget it!

While one remnant of disadvantage abides in this land, stand by one another! While proscription in any quarter exists, maintain intact all your phalanxes! While antagonism confronts your foremost men, hold on to all the instincts of race for the support of your leaders, and the elevation of your people! While the imputation of inferiority, justly or unjustly, is cast upon you, combine for all the elements of culture, wealth, and power! While any sensitiveness or repulsion discovers itself at your approach or presence, hold on to your own self-respect, keep up, *and be satisfied with*, your own distinctive circles!

And then the "poor, forsaken ones," in the lanes and alleys and cellars of the great cities; in remote villages and hamlets; on old plantations which their fathers' blood has moistened from generation to generation; ignorant, unkempt, dirty, animal-like, repulsive, and half heathen—brutal and degraded; in some States, tens and hundreds of thousands, not slaves, indeed, according to the letter of the law, but the tools and *serfs* of would-be oppressors: stand by THEM until the school-master and preacher reach them as well as us; and the noble Christian civilization of the land transforms their features and their forms, and changes their

rude huts into homes of beauty; and lifts them up into such grand superiority, that no one in the land will associate the word "Negro" with inferiority and degradation; but the whole land, yea, the whole world shall look upon them by-and-by, multitudinous in their brooding, clustered masses, "redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled," and exclaim, "Black, but comely!" But, while they are low, degraded, miserable, almost beastly, don't forget that you are colored men, as well as they; "your brothers' keepers."

Do not blink at the charge of inferiority. It is not a race peculiarity; and whatever its measure or extent in this country, it has been forced upon you. Do not deny it, but neutralize and destroy it, not by shrieks, or agonies, or foolish pretence; but by culture, by probity, and industry.

I know the natural resource of some minds, under these painful circumstances, to cry out, "Agitate! agitate!" But *cui bono*? What advantage will agitation bring? Everything has a value, according to its relation to its own natural and specific end. But what is the bearing of agitation to a purpose which is almost entirely subjective in its nature. For, as I take it, the object we must needs have in view, in the face of the disabilities which confront our race in this land, is the attainment of such general superiority that prejudice *must* decline. But agitation has no such force,

possesses no such value. Agitation is the expenditure of force: our end and aim is the husbandry of all our vital resources.

Character, my friends, is the grand, effective instrument which we are to use for the destruction of caste: Character, in its broad, wide, deep, and high significance; character, as evidenced in high moral and intellectual attainments; as significant of general probity, honor, honesty, and self-restraint; as inclusive of inward might and power; as comprehending the attainments of culture, refinement, and enlightenment; as comprising the substantial results of thrift, economy, and enterprise; and as involving the forces of combined energies and enlightened coöperation. Make this, *not* the exceptional, but the common, general reality, amid the diverse, wide-spread populations of the colored people in this country; and then all the theories of inferiority, all the assumptions of your native and invincible degradation will pass, with wonderful rapidity, into endless forgetfulness; and the people of the very *next*, nay, multitudes, in the decline of *this* generation, when they look upon us, will wonder at the degrading facts of a past and wretched history. Only secure high, commanding, and masterly Character; and then all the problems of caste, all the enigmas of prejudice, all unreasonable and all unreasoning repulsion, will be settled forever, though you were ten times blacker than

midnight! Then all false ideas concerning your nature and your qualities, all absurd notions relative to your capacity, shall vanish! Then every contemptuous fling shall be hushed, every insulting epithet be forgotten! Then, also, all the remembrances of a servile heritage, of ancestral degradation, shall be obliterated! Then all repulsive feelings, all evil dislikes shall fly away! Then, too, all timid disconcert shall depart from us, and all cramped and hesitant manhood shall die!

Dear brethren and friends, let there be but the clear demonstration of manly power and grand capacity in our race, in general, in this country; let there only be the wide out-flashings of art and genius, from their brains; and caste will slink, at once, oblivious to the shades. But no mere self-assertion, no strong, vociferous claims and clamor, can ever secure recognition and equality, so long as inferiority and degradation, if even cruelly entailed, abide as a heritage and a cancer. And I maintain we must *organize*, to the end that we may attain such character. The whole of our future on this soil depends upon that single fact of magnitude —character. Race, color, and all the accidents thereof have but little to do with the matter; and men talk idly when they say “we must forget that we are colored men.” What is needed is not that *we* should forget this fact, but that we should rise to such elevation that the *people of the land* be forced to forget all the facts

and theories of race, when they behold our thorough equality with them, in all the lines of activity and attainment, of culture and moral grandeur. The great necessity in this land is that its *white* population should forget, be made to forget, that we are *colored* men! Hence there is a work ahead for us, for the overthrow of caste, which will consume the best part of a century. He, whoever he may be, commits the greatest blunder, who advises you to disband your forces, until that work is brought to its end. It was only *after* the battle of Waterloo that England and her allies broke up their armies, and scattered their huge battalions. Not until we, as a people, have fully vindicated our race; not until we have achieved to the full their rights and prerogatives; not until, by character, we challenge universal respect and consideration in the land, can we sing the song:

—Come to the sunset tree,
The day is past and gone,
The woodman's axe lies free,
And the reaper's work is done.

Until that time, far distant from to-day, should the cry be everywhere among us: "Combine and marshal, for all the highest achievements in industry, social progress, literature, and religion!"

I hasten to conclude with two brief remarks:

First, then, let me remind and warn you, my friends, that we, as colored men, have no superfluity of powers

or faculties in the work which is before us, as a race, in this country. First of all, we all start with maimed and stunted powers. And next, the work before us is so distinct, definite, and, withal, so immense, that it tolerates no erratic wanderings to out-of-the-way and foreign fields.

And yet there are men who tell us that much of our work of the day is objective, that it lies among another people. But I beg to say that we have more than we are equal to in the needs of the six millions of our ignorant and benighted people, yet crippled and paralyzed by the lingering maladies of slavery. If we address ourselves strenuously and unitedly to *their* elevation and improvement we shall have our hands full for more than one generation, without flowing over with zeal and offices to a masterful people, laden with the enlightenment of centuries.

For one, I say very candidly that I do not feel it *my* special calling to wage war with and to extirpate caste. I am no way responsible for its existence. I abominate it as an enormity. *Theirs* is the responsibility who uphold it, and theirs is the obligation to destroy it. My work is special to my own people, and it is constructive. I beg leave to differ from that class of colored men who think that ours is a special mission, to leave our camp and to go over, as it were, among the Philistines, and to destroy their idols.

For my part, I am satisfied that my field of labor is with my own race in these times. I feel I have no exuberance of powers or ability to spend in any other field, or to bestow upon any other people. I say, as said the Shunamite woman, "I DWELL AMONG MY OWN PEOPLE" (2 Kings: IV, 13); not, indeed, as mindless of the brotherhood of the entire species, not as forgetful of the sentiment of fellowship with disciples of every name and blood; but as urged by the feeling of kinship, to bind myself as "with hooks of steel" to the most degraded class in the land, my own "kinsmen according to the flesh." I have the most thorough and radical conviction that the very first duty of colored men, in this our day and generation, is in the large field of effort which requires the regeneration and enlightenment of the colored race in these United States.

And second, from this comes the legitimate inference suggested by the text, *i. e.*, of union and co-operation through all our ranks for effective action and for the noblest ends. Everywhere throughout the Union wide and thorough organization of the people should be made, not for idle political logomachy, but for industrial effort, for securing trades for youth, for joint-stock companies, for manufacturing, for the production of the great staples of the land, and likewise for the higher purposes of life, *i. e.*, for mental and moral improvement, and raising the plane of social and domestic life among us.

In every possible way these needs and duties should be pressed upon their attention, by sermons, by lectures, by organized societies, by state and national conventions; the *latter not* for political objects, but for social, industrial ends and attainments. I see nought in the future but that we shall be scattered like chaff before the wind before the organized labor of the land, the great power of capital, and the tremendous tide of emigration, unless, as a people, we fall back upon the might and mastery which come from the combination of forces and the principle of industrial co-operation. Most of your political agitation is but wind and vanity. *What this race needs in this country is POWER—the forces that may be felt.* And that comes from character, and character is the product of religion, intelligence, virtue, family order, superiority, wealth, and the show of industrial forces. THESE ARE FORCES WHICH WE DO NOT POSSESS. *We are the only class which, as a class, IN THIS COUNTRY, IS WANTING IN THESE GRAND ELEMENTS.* The very first effort of the colored people should be to lay hold of them; and then they will take such root in this American soil that only the convulsive upheaving of the judgment-day can throw them out! And therefore I close, as I began, with the admonitory tones of the text. God grant they may be heeded at least by you who form this congregation, in your sacred work *here*, and in all your other relations: “They helped

every one his neighbor, and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails, that it SHOULD NOT BE MOVED!"

SERMON XIX.

THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT GARFIELD.

ST. JOHN, XI: 49, 50.

And one of them named Caiaphas, being the High Priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

All through the week,* my brethren, we, in common with the people of this land, have been passing through an ordeal of suspense, of agony, of almost despair, rarely paralleled in the history of this or any other country. Pain and suffering are the common lot of all men; but it is seldom that a whole nation is called to the intense, long-lingering anxiety which has been the lot of the many millions who make up this great nation. Day by day, nay, hour by hour, this entire republic has been on the rack, fearful of a report which would have brought anguish and bereavement to unnumbered hearts and households. For the entire people of this land have felt that the dreadful deed which brought our Chief Magistrate well nigh the shades of death was per-

*Preached Sunday, July 10, 1881.

sonal to themselves. When President Garfield was shot by a wild and reckless assassin, every citizen was shot at. His wounds were our wounds. His agonies were our agonies. It was not only that he, as President and Chief, stood officially before the people and the world the representative of the nation, and hence that to attack him was like an assault upon the flag of the country—an assault upon its every citizen; but, added to this, is the further fact, seen in various ways before this sad occurrence, that the genuine and intense personality of this man had “bowed the heart” of its whole population, “as the heart of one man.” Hence it is that a whole people have stood breathless, anxious, and appalled at his bedside; and strong men, when they heard of this calamity, fainted, and the tender hearts of women and children gave way to uncontrollable emotions, and the aged, in known instances, shocked at the awfulness of this assault, lay down and died!

Such interest, such sympathy, such fellowship in suffering with a suffering man has never before been witnessed. We know somewhat how great has been his anguish. But is it too great an exaggeration to say that thousands of people in this land, have suffered well nigh as much in *his* suffering as he himself has suffered? Is there any man here who can estimate the intense mental anguish, the harassing care of multitudes, as they have stood, day by day, trembling, almost despair-

ing, for the life of this eminent man? Many years ago I read a poem, "The Death-Bed," by Thomas Hood. It is a most graphic representation of the aching anxiousness of the soul at the dreaded death of a sufferer; but never have I so felt them in my heart as, day by day, with an anxiousness beyond expression, I have sought the bulletins from the "White House."

We watched her breathing through the night,
 Her breathing soft and low,
 As in her breast the wave of life
 Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
 So slowly moved about,
 As we had lent her half our powers
 To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
 Our fears our hopes belied—
 We thought her dying when she slept,
 And sleeping when she died.

It is a terrible event, my brethren! The fruit of the distempered brain and the wild will of a reckless and bloody-minded man! But the Divine will runs right beside it, with beneficent intent, and corrective and saving ends. Just so it is in all the dark and dreadful occurrences of life. The Almighty maintains His omnipresent power amid dread disaster, as well as in benignant event.

Neither man nor devil can shut God out of the cur-

rents of history. And we see that He moves, that He *will* move, in all the shady, murky occurrences of life, ever

—from seeming evil

Still educating good.

It is this counteracting and governing will of Deity, seen everywhere, in the dark as well as in the bright histories of men, which we call *Providence*. We see it in this occurrence. There is a providence in this dreadful tragedy. President Garfield is not allowed, you may be sure, to suffer in vain. There are great moral uses discoverable in his sore trial. Albeit not intended by the Evil One, our great sufferer is manifestly a sacrifice for national good. And the flippant words of Caiaphas, which were, after all, an unconscious prophecy, set forth the great principle of expiation which runs through all the relations of life; but which reaches its highest point in the sufferings of the Crucified. Although it be one of its lower senses, we may see it exemplified in our suffering Chief Magistrate.

1. See, first of all, the sudden check this event has given to the gross secularization of the American mind. The race for wealth in this country, the eager, outstretched ambitions for mere earthly good, outstrip the rivalries of all other nations. They are so absorbing and so immense that they allow only the most slender intrusion of things sacred and divine. They make men earthly in all the purposes of life, and create

that intense thirst for mere temporal gratification which is the special temptation of the young, and proves so widely the ruin of the old. The mind of the men of this land, beyond the general mind of other civilized nations, alien, for the most part, from art, unaddicted, save in the schools, to science and philosophy, runs with an eager, almost insane, craving after mere earthly good.

And yet, in an instant, as it were, this whole nation's secularity was brought to a stop. By one single flash of the telegraph, millions of men sickened of trade, and barter, and money-making. At a single whisper of national calamity, handicraft and farming, labor and service, are given up. The busy wheel of the factory ceases its whirl, and the song of the anvil is hushed. Wall street turns with disgust from its trade in stock, and mechanism puts aside the hammer and the plane.

In *this one* aspect undoubtedly that is a good which serves to arrest the blind rush after mere material ends. No one can measure the benediction, almost sacred in its nature, which lifts up a people, above earth and sense, into the domain of sentiment and feeling. It is a glorious incident in the life of any nation, when of itself pushes out of sight the gross and carnal, and advances spontaneously and in one mighty phalanx into the sphere of sensibility.

And next observe that with this sudden collapse

of the temporal, uprisings, as by a divine impulse, the grand outburst of a whole nation's intense and tearful sensibility. Not only women with their tender sympathies, and children with their warm and ardent feelings, but millions of men, with throbbing hearts, rushed, as it were, to this man's bedside, offering sympathy, devotedness, and gifts; nay, almost ready to tender their life-blood, to save the life of their loved and honored chief. See how this nation, for well nigh a week, has been given up to tears and indignation; alternate hope and fear; to prayer and supplications; and now, at the last, note the generous outpouring of riches, that the wife and children of this Chief Magistrate may not, in any event whatever, be left unprovided for and destitute!

My brethren, there is nothing fortuitous in these stirring occurrences. God's hand is manifestly visible, bright and beneficent, amid its darkest shades. Satan, indeed, and his dark-scarred instrument, "thought evil" in this bloody deed; but "God meant it unto good"; even the sudden wresting of a nation from gross, material purposes, and the uplifting them to the highest, noblest aims of life. And this I call a blessing. It is, indeed, almost a salvation, this sudden rising tidal wave of affection and sympathy in this nation's heart. Whether its gross materialism could have been disturbed in any ordinary way, is doubtful. Whether its

dull lethargy could have been galvanized even into temporary life, by common occurrence, is a question. It seems as though some terrible thrill was needed; as though nothing but the threatened life of a grand victim could sweep away the film from the eyes of this nation, and enable it, of a sudden, to *see*.

I feel, as much as any man, the horror of this murderous act. But when I observe this grand demonstration of a nation's moral nature; when I see the *spiritual* bursting forth from the caverns of a people's cold, calculating secularity; I behold a providence that cannot be mistaken, and learn, besides, that it is sometimes expedient "that one man should die, that a whole nation perish not"!

2. But neither the keenness of our feelings nor the depth of our sensibilities should cause us to pass by great lessons which spring immediately from this sad event. People talk of it as a casualty. Some look at it as a mystery. But remember "that affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." There is nothing of chance or hap-hazard in this calamity. It requires no extraordinary insight to discover in it the principle of sequence. For, unless I make the greatest of mistakes, cause and effect are as plainly evident in this tragic occurrence as in any of the other incidents which go to make the history of the times.

Let me set before you some of the lessons which it seems to me that this nation is called upon, just now, to learn.

And (1) this attempted assassination brings vividly before us the intoxicating and demoralizing effects of our political system. It is a system calculated most directly to carry men beyond themselves, to taint the brains of thousands with incipient insanity, and to hurry them on to wild and irresponsible actions. We talk, in common parlance, of the wildness of money speculations and of the madness of unlawful lottery schemes. But these ventures are actual soberness compared with the intense and extravagant incitements which come out of our political agitations. We have, in our country, settled organisms and established modes in politics, which, in their operations, seem designed as certainly they do to produce widespread and convulsive upheavals. Why, the very caucusses of parties, and they are multitudinous, are flames. Our vast political assemblages, what are they but burning blasts? Our national conventions, but tempests? Our tumultuous and swarming canvasses, but paroxysms? Our grand elections, what but tremendous tornadoes? And then, when success has attended these almost frenzied partisan efforts, what can we call the uprising and the passionate pressure of the mighty army of anxious, greedy, determined office-seekers—what but blasting hurricanes?

There can be no doubt, as it strikes me, that this homicidal attack has sprung directly from this exciting system. This assassin's career goes to show that he possessed that temperament and that sort of brains, fitted, most precisely, to the counter-cries and the intemperate incitements of our recent political and partisan upheavals. His very letters, words, and utterances show that his mind for a long time had become stimulated to frenzy by agitations and strifes, of which you all know, but which may not be dwelt upon nor too plainly spoken of in this sacred place. The anxiousness for office was indeed an element in his conduct; and that is another feature of this deadly political inebriation. But the main characteristic of the assassin's motive and act, was partisan spleen and political dudgeon, chafed and inflamed to murderous purpose.

The clear-minded citizen of every name has seen somewhat, in the last ten days, the bane of this whole system. By blood, perchance—which God forbid—by death, a sudden revelation has been made of the organic but destructive system of fire, storm, and tempest which characterizes our national politics. This discovery, sad and humiliating as it may be, is somewhat compensatory for the prodigious evil which fathers it. And if this great lesson is thoroughly learned at this time, then, in the divine providence, it will be clearly seen how, at times, it is “expedient that one man should

die, and that the whole nation perish not." For perish it will if reason, restraint, unselfishness, and sober duty are not made stronger and more conspicuous elements in our political strife.

3. Turn to another lesson suggested by this dark occurrence. We may see, just now, the ignoble fact that our people hold government and governmental rule as too cheap a thing in estimation. I have the impression that, outside of the thinking, cultured classes, the average American thinks that the governmental system of the land is simply his tool, the republic as only a thing for personal convenience. Allied to this notion is the other feeling, that neither nation, nor any officer thereof, must trench too much upon personal desire or individual purpose.

What is the common sentiment abroad in the land with regard to the Republic, as a nation? Do not men declare that it is a man-made thing? Do they not vociferate that civil government is merely human? That it is "of and by the people," with the narrow limitations of the assertion which they make? Nay, are there not large masses of people in the land who would resent as an insult and an outrage, the *denial* that any government, that is organic in its nature, was made "by the people"? And is it not owing to this that we look in vain on this soil for that filial, that reverential sentiment toward government which characterized even the higher pagan nations of antiquity?

It is this cheap idea of government, an idea as false as it is puerile, which has served to demoralize the American mind, and which has produced such wide unrestraint, not only in the civil, but in all the other relations of life. For if there is one special peculiarity of our national character, it is dislike of rule and authority. It comes out in civil affairs, in churches, in colleges, in common schools, and in families.

The notion of government most widely prevalent among us is that it is mostly a subjective thing. People feel that they must be left to govern themselves. External authority is a grievance and an irritation. And hence it arises that not only men and women, but children, in our day, and at a very early age, chafe under rule, reject authority, and spurn control.

One of the most alarming things in the life of the nation is the perversion that we discover in all the lines of life—the perversion of liberty into license. And when a people reach such a state that they lose sight of the magnitude of the very idea of government, and begin to eschew the principle of rule and authority, then they are rapidly verging toward anarchy, toward speedy and certain ruin.

One grand corrective to this error lies in the region of thought and principle. "People who have been entrapped by false opinions must be liberated by convincing truths." Hence, in these days, when the idea

of obedience to constituted authority seems fading away, it is the duty of ministers of the Gospel to press upon the attention of the people the truth, that government is, *per se*, in itself, in idea, a grand and majestic thing. The fact must be set forth with prominence, that the nation is a creation and manifestation of God. For, my brethren, all civil power is from God Himself. When St. Paul, in one place, declares, "there is no power but of God," he asserts the magnitude of the very principle of government, and that in *all* relations. And when, in another, he commands, "Honor the king," he inculcates the duty of subjection to and reverence for constituted magisterial authority.

One of the deep undercurrents of American thought, in responsible circles, has been with regard to the drift of society to lawless freedom. Everywhere it has given thinking men the greatest concern and anxiety. It comes up, in this month of July, on the very eve of Independence Day, with a force and significance never felt before since 1776. It cannot be put down now until some true, solid basis is found, not only in opinion, but in practice and in law, for the security of that reverence and subjection to authority which is so much needed in civil, domestic, and, indeed, in all the other relations of life. And, in this respect, grieved and heart-sore as we all are at our President's sufferings, we may be brought to see "how expedient it is that one

man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

3. Immediately connected with the point just considered is the common irreverence among us for rulers and persons in authority. Even (so-called) great men think that they show their superiority when they stand before multitudes and proclaim the dogma, that "civil officers are only the people's servants." And, certainly, if the notion of government just attacked, be true, then *this* notion concerning civil officers is certainly its legitimate inference. For, if government be the cheap thing men claim that it is, then its official representatives are cheap things too.

But, my friends, the notion is thoroughly false. The statement that officers are servants is only a half-truth; and half-truths are most generally whole lies. The President is indeed to serve the people. His office is, without doubt, an office of service; and this is no new discovery of this country, because it is a republic. Kings and emperors, in the oldest dynasties of the old world have, from time immemorial, acknowledged this obligation. One of the oldest royal houses of Europe has kept, as its perpetual family motto, the words, "*Ich dien*," I serve. Even pagan rulers have been awfully impressed with the idea that "they acted in trust." But the notion that, because authority is a trust, and then, because it *is* a trust, that rulers are only the peo-

ple's servants, shows blindness to the grander factor in the constitution of authority, viz., that "the powers that be are ordained of God," and that "they are the ministers of God attending continually upon this very thing," i. e., the exercise of civil authority.

Yes, there are two factors in all civil government, and in the exercise of all civil authority; and it is one of the gravest of all mistakes that it was not laid down thus, in the infancy of the nation, in the great charter of our freedom, the "Declaration of Independence." When Thomas Jefferson declared that "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," and left his dogma crudely, at that point, he shut out a limitation which the pride and self-assertion of degenerate humanity is always too reluctant to yield, and too tardy to supply.

The theory of the Declaration is incomplete and misleading. Governments, my brethren, derive their just authority, *first* of all, from the will of God; and then *next*, from the consent of the governed. It is because of the exclusion of this prime factor in this axiom that the governments of the earth are all more or less sick and diseased. It is owing very considerably to national blindness to this truth that *we* have had so many sore evils in this land, and now, at last, a great, national disaster. The people of this country, in vast self-importance, have been accustomed to look down upon the

chief magistracy of the land as a convenient instrumentality for personal ends. The office has been too much regarded as the facile agent of grand politicians, for party objects and partisan ambitions. But in this matter they have not been the only sinners. It has been the wont of the people, as well, to regard both the office and its functions as "good for use." This, in too many cases, has been one-half the meaning of the term "availability," applied to presidential candidates. The grand authority of a ruler, the reverence due to the Chief Magistrate, have been too generally forgotten. People in other lands do not look thus upon their kings and emperors and great chieftains. "Ah!" is the rebuke I hear coming up from the pews; "This is a Republic. Ours is a democratic country." "Well, what of that?" is my reply. Your President is as much a ruler, he is as truly a potentate as the Emperor of Russia or the Queen of Great Britain. He is your ruler and grand magistrate, and mine. And he sits in his chair of authority by the will of God, declared in governmental arrangements, as distinctly and positively as though he had been born to the office.

Alas! instead of thus regarding the dignities of the presidency as representing the *divine* sovereignty in human government; instead of honoring the President as incarnating the dread sovereignty of the nation; the habit has prevailed of regarding him as the biggest

servant in the land. And intense canvasses have been carried on, the main stimulant to which has been the disposal, as through an elected instrument or machine, of thousands of offices. And then when an election has been carried, we have seen how cheap a thing people regarded their chief ruler, in the fact that the meanest men, greedy of office, could demand an audience at the "White House," and get it, too, with a facility which would be scouted by a manufacturer at Lowell, or a merchant in Boston. Nay, and worse than this—the cases have been numerous of men, when their applications have been rejected, who have turned, with "proud and haughty wrath," from the Chief Magistrate, taken his refusal as a personal insult, and assailed him with revenge and unforgiving malice.

Almighty God, in all the histories, has spoken "in divers manners" to various peoples. He has spoken by angels, by oracles and prophets, by dreams and revelations, and so made known His will to nations and to men. And He still speaks to them. He speaks to them at times by providences. Just now he has spoken to *this* nation, through the pistol-shot of an assassin. The *not* s rable wretch, we know, is an execration to the Almighty, but He overrules his bloody deed to immediate good. In the flash of a murderer's pistol the whole nation sees suddenly and in glaring light the sin of its cheap estimate of the presidential office. And I

venture to predict that, from this time, the office of Chief Magistrate will be withdrawn from the pressure of office-seekers; the White House will get the dignity, the reserve, the sanctity of national sovereignty; and the person of the chief ruler will henceforth be accessible only to persons of character, reputation, and personal responsibility.

And thus again, my friends, while our anguished hearts go out with tenderest sensibility and solicitude to our still endangered President, we learn "how expedient it is that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not!"

What I have spoken this day is nothing new. I make no pretence whatever to originality in the views I have expressed. The main truths I have brought before you have been not infrequently suggested by eminent persons; and I have been, and for a long time, so thoroughly convinced of their truth that they rush with unusual force upon my mind, at this juncture, and demand utterance. That great political prophet, Alexander Hamilton, predicted not a few of the evils I have pointed out, although he did not live to see them. In more recent times they have been seen and pointed out by a small body of men, called "Civil Service Reformers." And no body of men in the land has been more laughed at and ridiculed than they. Their publications

have been numerous, and, I may add, in many cases, as fruitless as numerous. But the lightning, the lightning of disaster, has done more for them than all their books and speeches and essays. It has shivered our civil service system, as now ordered, to pieces; and scattered the multitudinous swarms of office-seekers from the portals of the presidential mansion.

2. I have brought this subject before *this* congregation in particular, because, although we colored men are not yet allowed either a large participation in politics, or governmental rule, or official patronage, I am, nevertheless, anxious that *my* people should be ranked among conservative men in this land, and stand among the firmest upholders of law and authority. The sudden rise to freedom, the newness of our participation in political prerogatives, above all the oscillation from extreme servitude to the right of suffrage—all naturally tend to land us in the extreme of wild and thoughtless democratic opinion, and expose us to the danger of mistaking license for liberty. Thank God, these dangers have been but little realized as yet. And may they never show themselves amid the black population of this country! As in the past, so in the future may it ever be, that the blood of this race may furnish no nursing-plot for treasons, seditions, and assassinations!

A people numbering more than six millions, with a rapidly-increasing birth-rate, growing on every side in

knowledge and material power, must, from the very nature of things, become, ere long, a most formidable phalanx in the multitudinous population of the country. I pray Almighty God that *this* race may ever be found strong and determined for good, stable government, their influence weighty in the state for authority and order, the constant foes of revolutions, communism, and revolt ;

Zealous, yet modest, innocent, though free,
Serene amidst alarms, inflexible in faith.

3. My words, this morning, have had respect, almost entirely, to the vicarious position of our Chief Magistrate. I have dwelt all along upon the fact that this chief ruler has been called to suffering, perhaps to death, so that the nation may not die ! I have preferred this line of thought, albeit the tender, sympathizing aspects of the case were far more inviting to every Christian heart. I know full well that

—Tears to human suffering are due.

And our deepest sympathies have thrilled at this awful tragedy, our hearts been faint and sickened many an hour, many a moment since its occurrence ; and our prayer and cries constantly ascend to heaven for the recovery of the great sufferer. The other aspect of the case, however, seems to me no less tender and interesting. Certainly, if any man in this nation must needs be a victim, for mysterious, but definite national good,

no nobler offering can be laid upon the altar of a nation's sacrifice than this man. If great good is to spring from this dreadful visitation, no more exalted victim could have been chosen than he. His personal virtues have been long conspicuous. His clear, unconcealed, yet unostentatious piety is everywhere known and acknowledged. The fine, unequalled qualities—a rare thing in our national history—which he has brought to the seat of national authority have excited both unusual surprise and unusual admiration. Statesmanlike in national politics, strong in intellectual capacity, pure in life and reputation, his character and abilities would give moral fitness to his sacrifice, if it should please God that he should succumb to the assassin's bullet! . .

SERMON XX.

THE DESTINED SUPERIORITY OF THE NEGRO.

A Thanksgiving Discourse, 1877.

ISAIAH LXI, 7.

For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion.

The promise contained in the text is a variation from the ordinary rule of the divine government. In that government, as declared in the Holy Scriptures, shame signifies the hopeless confusion and the utter destruction of the wicked. But in this passage, we see an extraordinary display of God's forbearance and mercy. Shame, here, is less intense than in other places. In this case it stands, indeed, for trial and punishment, but for punishment and trial which may correct and purify character.

The allusion is supposed to refer to the Jews after their restoration, and the passage is regarded as teaching that, for all their long-continued servitude and suffering, God, in the end, would make them abundant recompenses. Great shame and reproach He had given them, through long centuries; but now, when discipline

and trial had corrected and purified them, He promises them double honor and reward.

As thus explained, the text opens before us some interesting features of God's dealing with nations; by the light of which we may, perchance, somewhat determine the destiny of the race with which we are connected. My purpose is to attempt, this morning, an investigation of God's disciplinary and retributive economy in races and nations; with the hope of arriving at some clear conclusions concerning the destiny of the Negro race.

1. Some peoples God does not merely correct; He destroys them. He visits them with deep and abiding shame. He brings upon them utter confusion. This is a painful but a certain fact of Providence. The history of the world is, in one view, a history of national destructions. The wrecks of nations lie everywhere upon the shores of time. Real aboriginal life is rarely found. People after people, in rapid succession, have come into constructive being, and as rapidly gone down; lost forever from sight beneath the waves of a relentless destiny. We read in our histories of the great empires of the old world; but when the traveller goes abroad, and looks for Nineveh and Babylon, for Pompeii and Herculaneum, he finds nought but the out-stretched graveyards which occupy the sites of departed nations. On the American continent, tribe after tribe

have passed from existence; yea, there are Bibles in Indian tongues which no living man is now able to read. Their peoples have all perished!

When I am called upon to account for all this loss of national and tribal life, I say that God destroyed them. And the declaration is made on the strength of a principle attested by numerous facts in sacred and profane history; that when the sins of a people reach a state of hateful maturity, then God sends upon them sudden destruction.

Depravity prepares some races of men for destruction. Every element of good has gone out of them. Even the most primitive virtues seem to have departed. A putrescent virus has entered into and vitiated their whole nature. They stand up columnar ruins! Such a people is doomed. It cannot live. Like the tree "whose root is rottenness," it stands awaiting the inevitable fall. That fall is its property. No fierce thunder-bolt is needed, no complicated apparatus of ethereal artillery. Let the angry breath of an Archangel but feebly strike it, and, tottering, it sinks into death and oblivion!

Such was the condition of the American Indian at the time of the discovery of America by Columbus. The historical fact abides, that when the white man first reached the shores of this continent he met the tradition of a decaying population.

The New Zealand population of our own day presents a parallel case. By a universal disregard of the social and sanitary conditions which pertain to health and longevity, their physical constitution has fallen into absolute decay; and ere long it also must become extinct.

Indeed, the gross paganism of these two peoples was both moral and physical stagnation; was domestic and family ruin; and has resulted in national suicide! It came to them as the effect, the direct consequence of great penal laws established by the Almighty, in which are wrapped the punishment of sin. Hence, if you reject the idea of direct interference in the affairs of peoples, and take up the idea of law and penalty, or that of cause and effect, it amounts to the same thing. Whether through God's fixed law, or directly, by His personal, direful visitation, the admission is the same. The punishment and the ruin come from the throne of God!

The most striking instances of the working of this principle of ruin are set before us in the word of God. The case of Egypt is a signal one. For centuries this nation was addicted to the vilest sins and the grossest corruption. There was no lack of genius among them, no imbecility of intellect. It was a case of wanton, high-headed moral rebellion. As generations followed each other, they heaped up abominations upon the

impurities of their ancestors, until they well-nigh reached the heavens. Then the heavens became darkened with direful wrath! The earth quaked and trembled with God's fearful anger; and judgment upon judgment swept, like lava, over that doomed people, assuring them of the awful destruction which always waits upon sin. And the death of the first-born at the Passover, and the catastrophe of the Red Sea, showed that the crisis of their fate had come.

In precisely the same manner God dealt with the wicked people of Assyria, Babylon, Tyre, and Persia. Read the prophecies concerning these nations, and it seems as though you could see an august judge sitting upon the judgment-seat, and, of a sudden, putting on his black cap, and, with solemn gesture and a choked utterance, pronouncing the sentence of death upon the doomed criminals before him!

2. Turn now to the more gracious aspects of God's economy. As there are peoples whom He destroys, so on the other hand there are those whom, while indeed He chastises, yet at the same time He preserves. He gives them shame, but not perpetual shame. He disciplines; but when discipline has worked out its remedial benefits, he recompenses them for their former ignominy, and gives them honor and prosperity.

The merciful aspect of God's economy shines out in human history as clearly as His justice and judgment.

The Almighty seizes upon superior nations and, by mingled chastisements and blessings, gradually leads them on to greatness. That this discipline of nations is carried on in the world is evident. Probation, that is, as designed to teach self-restraint, and to carry on improvement, is imposed upon them, as well as upon individuals. It is part of the history of all nations and all races; only some will not take it; seem to have no moral discernment to use it; and they, just like wilful men, are broken to pieces. Some, again, fit themselves to it, and gain all its advantages. What was the servile sojourn of the children of Israel, four hundred years, in Egypt, but a process of painful preparation for a coming national and ecclesiastical responsibility? What, at a later period, the Babylonish captivity, but a corrective ordeal, to eliminate from them every element of idolatry? What was the feudality of Europe, but a system of training for a high and grand civilization?

Now it seems to me that these several experiments were not simply judicial and retributive. For vengeance crushes and annihilates; but chastisement, however severe, saves, and at the same time corrects and restores. We may infer, therefore, that these several providences were a mode of divine schooling, carried on by the Almighty for great ends which He wished to show in human history.

But how? in what way does God carry on His sys-

tem of restorative discipline? The universal principle which regulates this feature of the Divine system is set forth very clearly in the Eighteenth Psalm: "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward." These words show the principles by which God carries on His government. And they apply as well to organic society as to single persons.

We have already seen that with the froward God showed Himself froward; that is, those who resist Him, God resists, to their utter shame and confusion. Their miseries were not corrective or disciplinary. They were the blows of avenging justice; the thunder-bolts of final and retributive wrath! In their case, moreover, there was a constitutional fitness to destruction, brought upon them by their own immoral perverseness. So, too, on the other hand, we may see qualities which God favors, albeit He does put the peoples manifesting them to trial and endurance. He sees in them cultivated elements of character, which, when brought out and trained, are capable of raising them to superiority. He does not see merit; and it is not because of desert that He bestows His blessings. But when the Almighty sees in a nation or people latent germs of virtues, he seizes upon and schools them by trial and discipline; so

that by the processes of divers correctives, these virtues may bud and blossom into beautiful and healthful maturity.

Now, when the Psalmist speaks of the merciful, the upright, and the pure, he does not use these terms in an absolute sense, for in that sense no such persons exist. He speaks of men comparatively pure, upright, and merciful. Some of the nations, as I have already pointed out, were at the lowest grade of moral turpitude. On the other hand, there are and ever have been heathen peoples less gross and barbarous than others: peoples with great hardihood of soul; peoples retaining the high principle of right and justice; peoples with rude but strong virtues, clinging to the simple ideas of truth and honor; peoples who guarded jealously the purity of their wives and the chastity of their daughters; peoples who, even with a false worship, showed reluctance to part with the gleams which came, though but dimly, from the face of the one true God of heaven!

Now the providence of God intervenes for the training and preservation of such peoples. Thus we read in Genesis that, because of man's universal wickedness, "it repented the Lord that he had made man"; but immediately it says that He approved "just Noah, and entered into covenant with him." So, after the deluge, God saw, amid universal degeneracy, the conspicuous piety of one man; for obedience and faith were, without

doubt, original though simple elements of Abraham's character. To these germinal roots God brought the discipline of trial; and by them, through this one man, educated up a people who, despite their faults, shed forth the clearest religious light of all antiquity, and to whom were committed the oracles of God.

The ancient Greeks and Romans were rude and sanguinary Pagans; and so, too, the Germans and the Scandinavian tribes. Yet they had great, sterling virtues. The Greeks were a people severely just; the Spartans, especially, rigidly simple and religious. The Romans were unequalled for reverence for law and subjection to legitimate authority. Tacitus, himself a heathen, extols the noble and beneficent traits of German character, and celebrates their hospitality and politeness. The Saxons, even in a state of rudeness, were brave, though fierce; truthful; with strong family virtues, and great love of liberty.

Added to these peculiarities we find the following characteristics common to each and all these people—common, indeed, to all strong races; wanting in the low and degraded. The masterful nations are all, more or less, distinguished for vitality, plasticity, receptivity, imitation, family feeling, veracity, and the sentiment of devotion. These qualities may have been crude and unbalanced. They existed perchance right beside most decided and repulsive vices; but they were deeply

imbedded in the constitution of these people; and served as a basis on which could be built up a character fitted to great ends.

Archbishop Trench, in his comment upon the words of the "Parable of the Sower,"—that is, that "they on the good ground are they who, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it"—says, "that no heart can be said to be absolutely good; but there are conditions of heart in which the truth finds readier entrance than in others." So we maintain that there are conditions of character and of society, to which the divine purposes of grace and civilization are more especially fitted, and adapt themselves. Such, it is evident, is the explanation of the providential spread of early civilization. It passed by the more inane peoples, and fastened itself to the strong and masculine. Such, too, was the spontaneous flow of early Christianity from Jerusalem. It sought, as by a law of affinity, the strong colonies of Asia Minor, and the powerful states along the Mediterranean; and so spread abroad through the then civilized Europe.

Does God then despise the weak? Nay, but the weak and miserable peoples of the earth have misused their prerogatives, and so unfitted themselves to feel after God.

And because they have thus perverted the gifts of God, and brought imbecility upon their being, they

perish. The iniquity of the Amorites in Joshua's day was full—as you may see in Leviticus xviii—full of lust and incest and cruelty and other unspeakable abominations; and they were swept from the face of the earth! They perished by the sword; but the sword is not an absolute necessity to the annihilation of any corrupt and ruined people. Their sins, of themselves, eat out their life. With a touch they go. It was because of the deep and utter demoralization of Bois Gilbert that he fell before the feeble lance of Ivanhoe; for, in the world of morals, weakness and death are oftentimes correlative of baseness and infamy.

On the other hand the simplest seeds of goodness are pleasing to the Almighty, and He sends down the sunshine of His favor and the dews of His conserving care into the darkest rubbish, to nourish and vivify such seeds, and to “give them body as it pleaseth Him; and to every seed his own body.” And the greatness of the grand nations has always sprung from the seeds of simple virtues which God has graciously preserved in them; which virtues have been cultured by gracious providences or expanded by Divine grace, into true holiness.

3. Let us now apply the train of thought thus presented to the history and condition of the Negro; to ascertain, if possible, whether we can draw therefrom expectation of a future for this race.

At once the question arises: Is this a race doomed to destruction? or is it one possessed of those qualities, and so morally disciplined by trial, as to augur a vital destiny, and high moral uses, in the future?

To the first of these questions I reply that there is not a fact, pertinent to this subject, that does not give a most decisive negative. The Negro race, nowhere on the globe, is a doomed race!

It is now nigh five hundred years since the breath of the civilized world touched, powerfully, for the first time, the mighty masses of the Pagan world in America, Africa, and the isles of the sea. And we see, almost everywhere, that the weak, heathen tribes of the earth have gone down before the civilized European. Nation after nation has departed before his presence, tribe after tribe! In America the catalogue of these disastrous eclipses overruns, not only dozens, but even scores of cases. Gone, never again to take rank among the tribes of men, are the Iroquois and the Mohegans, the Pequods and the Manhattans, the Algonquins and the brave Mohawks, the gentle Caribs, and the once refined Aztecs!

In the Pacific seas, islands are scattered abroad like stars in the heavens; but the sad fact remains that from many of them their population has departed, like the morning mist. In other cases, as in the Sandwich Islands, they have long since begun their

Funeral marches to the grave!

Just the reverse with the Negro! Wave after wave of a destructive tempest has swept over his head, without impairing in the least his peculiar vitality. Indeed, the Negro, in certain localities, is a superior man, to-day, to what he was three hundred years ago. With an elasticity rarely paralleled, he has risen superior to the dread inflictions of a prolonged servitude, and stands, to-day, in all the lands of his thralldom, taller, more erect, more intelligent, and more aspiring than any of his ancestors for more than two thousand years of a previous era. And while in other lands, as in cultivated India, the native has been subjected to a foreign yoke, the negro races of Africa still retain, for the most part, their original birthright. Their soil has not passed into the possession of foreign people. Many of the native kingdoms stand this day, upon the same basis of power which they held long centuries ago. The adventurous traveler, as he passes farther and farther into the interior, sends us reports of populous cities, superior people, and vast kingdoms; given to enterprise, and engaged in manufactures, agriculture, and commerce.

Even this falls short of the full reality. For civilization, at numerous places, as well in the interior as on the coast, has displaced ancestral heathenism; and the standard of the Cross, uplifted on the banks of its great rivers, at large and important cities, and in the great

seats of commercial activity, shows that the Heralds of the Cross have begun the conquest of the continent for their glorious King. Vital power, then, is a property of the Negro family.

But has this race any of those other qualities, and such a number of them, as warrants the expectation of superiority? Are plasticity, receptivity, and assimilation among his constitutional elements of character?

So far as the first of these is concerned there can be no doubt. The flexibility of the negro character is not only universally admitted; it is often formulated into a slur. The race is possessed of a nature more easily moulded than any other class of men. Unlike the stolid Indian, the Negro yields to circumstances, and flows with the current of events. Hence the most terrible afflictions have failed to crush him. His facile nature wards them off, or else, through the inspiration of hope, neutralises their influence. Hence, likewise, the pliancy with which, and without losing his distinctiveness, he runs into the character of other people; and thus bends adverse circumstances to his own convenience; thus, also, in a measurable degree, linking the fortunes of his superiors to his own fate and destiny.

These peculiarities imply another prime quality, anticipating future superiority; I mean imitation. This is also universally conceded, with, however, a

contemptuous fling, as though it were an evidence of inferiority. But Burke tells us that "imitation is the second passion belonging to society; and this passion," he says, "arises from much the same cause as sympathy." This forms our manners, our opinions, our lives. It is one of the strongest links of society. Indeed, all civilization is carried down from generation to generation, or handed over from the superior to the inferior, by the means of this principle. A people devoid of imitation are incapable of improvement, and must go down; for stagnation of necessity brings with it decay and ruin.

On the other hand, the Negro, with a mobile and plastic nature, with a strong receptive faculty, seizes upon and makes over to himself, by imitation, the better qualities of others. First of all, observe that, by a strong assimilative tendency, he reduplicates himself, by attaining both the likeness of and an affinity to the race with which he dwells; and then, while retaining his characteristic peculiarities, he glides more or less into the traits of his neighbors. Among Frenchmen, he becomes, somewhat, the lively Frenchman; among Americans, the keen, enterprising American; among Spaniards, the stately, solemn Spaniard; among Englishmen, the solid, phlegmatic Englishman.

This peculiarity of the Negro is often sneered at. It is decried as the simulation of a well-known and grotesque animal. But the traducers of the Negro forget

that "the entire Grecian civilization is stratified with the elements of imitation; and that Roman culture is but a copy of a foreign and alien civilization." These great nations laid the whole world under contribution to gain superiority. They seized upon all the spoils of time. They became cosmopolitan thieves. They stole from every quarter. They pounced, with eagle eye, upon excellence wherever discovered, and seized upon it with rapacity. In the Negro character resides, though crudely, precisely the same eclectic quality which characterized those two great, classic nations; and he is thus found in the very best company. The ridicule which visits him goes back directly to them. The advantage, however, is his own. Give him time and opportunity, and in all imitative art he will rival them both.

This quality of imitation has been the grand preservative of the Negro in all the lands of his thralldom. Its bearing upon his future distinction in Art is not germane to this discussion; but one can clearly see that this quality of imitation, allied to the receptivity of the race, gives promise of great fitness for Christian training, and for the higher processes of civilization.

But observe, again, that the imitative disposition of the negro race leads to aspiration. Its tendency runs to the higher and the nobler qualities presented to observation. Placed in juxtaposition with both the

Indian and the Caucasian, as in Brazil and in this land, the race turns away from the downward, unprogressive Indian, and reaches forth for all the acquisitions of the Caucasian or the Spaniard. And hence wherever the Negro family has been in a servile position, however severe may have been their condition, without one single exception their native capacity has always

—glinted forth
Amid the storm;

preserving the captive exiles of Africa from utter annihilation; stimulating them to enterprise and aspiration; and, in every case, producing men who have shown respectable talent as mechanics and artisans; as soldiers, in armies; as citizens of great commonwealths; not unfrequently as artists; not seldom as scholars; frequently as ministers of the Gospel; and at times as scientific men, and men of letters.

I referred, at the beginning, and as one of the conditions of a Divine and merciful preservation of a people—for future uses, to the probation of discipline and trial, for the cultivation of definite moral qualities. Is there any such large fact in the history of this race? What else, I ask, can be the significance of the African slave-trade? What is the meaning of our deep thralldom since 1620? Terrible as it has been, it has not been **the** deadly hurricane portending death. During its long periods, although great cruelty and wide-spread

death have been large features in the history of the Negro, nevertheless they have been overshadowed by the merciful facts of great natural increase, much intellectual progress, the gravitation of an unexampled and world-wide philanthropy to the race, singular religious susceptibility and progress, and generous, wholesale emancipations, inclusive of millions of men, women, and children.

This history, then, does not signify retribution; does not forecast extinction. It is most plainly disciplinary and preparative. It is the education which comes from trial and endurance; for with it has been allied, more or less, the grand moral training of the religious tendencies of the race.

Here, then, are the several conditions, the characteristic marks which, in all history, have served to indicate the permanency and the progress of races. In all other cases they have been taken as forecasting greatness. Is there any reason for rejecting their teachings, and refusing their encouragements and inspirations, when discovered in the Negro?

I feel fortified, moreover, in the principles I have to-day set forth, by the opinions of great, scrutinizing thinkers. In his treatise on Emancipation, written in 1880, Dr. Channing says: "The Negro is one of the best races of the human family. He is among the mildest and gentlest of men. He is singularly susceptible of improvement."

Alexander Kinmont, in his "Lectures on Man," declares that "the sweet graces of the Christian religion appear almost too tropical and tender plants to grow in the soil of the Caucasian mind; they require a character of human nature of which you can see the rude lineaments in the Ethiopian, to be implanted in, and grow naturally and beautifully withal." Adamson, the traveller who visited Senegal, in 1754, said: "The Negroes are sociable, humane, obliging, and hospitable; and they have generally preserved an estimable simplicity of domestic manners. They are distinguished by their tenderness for their parents, and great respect for the aged—a patriarchal virtue which, in our day, is too little known." Dr. Raleigh, also, at a recent meeting in London, said: "There is in these people a hitherto undiscovered mine of love, the development of which will be for the amazing welfare of the world. . . . Greece gave us beauty; Rome gave us power; the Anglo-Saxon race unites and mingles these; but in the African people there is the great, gushing wealth of love which will develop wonders for the world."

I. We have seen, to-day, the great truth, that when God does not destroy a people, but, on the contrary, trains and disciplines it, it is an indication that He intends to make something of them, and to do something for them. It signifies that He is graciously interested in such a people. In a sense, not equal, indeed, to the case of

the Jews, but parallel, in a lower degree, such a people are a "chosen people" of the Lord. There is, so to speak, a *covenant* relation which God has established between Himself and them; dim and partial, at first, in its manifestations; but which is sure to come to the sight of men and angels, clear, distinct, and luminous. You may take it as a sure and undoubted fact that God presides, with sovereign care, over such a people; and will surely preserve, educate, and build them up.

2. The discussion of this morning teaches us that the Negro race, of which we are a part, and which, as yet, in great simplicity and with vast difficulties, is struggling for place and position in this land, discovers, most exactly, in its history, the principle I have stated. And we have in this fact the assurance that the Almighty is interested in all the great problems of civilization and of grace carrying on among us. All this is God's work. He has brought this race through a wilderness of disasters; and at last put them in the large, open place of liberty; but not, you may be assured, for eventual decline and final ruin. You need not entertain the shadow of a doubt that the work which God has begun and is now carrying on, is for the elevation and success of the Negro. This is the significance and the worth of all effort and all achievement, of every signal providence, in this cause; or, otherwise, all the labors of men and all the mightiness of God is vanity! Nothing, believe me, on earth; nothing brought from perdition,

can keep back this destined advance of the Negro race. No conspiracies of men nor of devils! The slave trade could not crush them out. Slavery, dread, direful, and malignant, could only stay it for a time. But now it is coming, coming, I grant, through dark and trying events, but surely coming. The Negro—black, curly-headed, despised, repulsed, sneered at—is, nevertheless, a vital being, and irrepressible. Everywhere on earth has been given him, by the Almighty, assurance, self-assertion, and influence. The rise of two Negro States within a century, feeble though they be, has a bearing upon this subject. The numerous emancipations, which now leave not more than a chain or two to be unfastened, have, likewise, a deep, moral significance. Thus, too, the rise in the world of illustrious Negroes, as Touissant L'Ouverture, Henry Christophe, Benjamin Banneker, Eustace the Philanthropist, Stephen Allan Benson, and Bishop Crowther.

With all these providential indications in our favor, let us bless God and take courage. Casting aside everything trifling and frivolous, let us lay hold of every element of power, in the brain; in literature, art, and science; in industrial pursuits; in the soil; in coöperative association; in mechanical ingenuity; and above all, in the religion of our God; and so march on in the pathway of progress to that superiority and eminence which is our rightful heritage, and which is evidently the promise of our God!

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